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SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM ART HANDBOOKS.

EDITED BY WILLIAM MASKELL.

No. 4.—MAIOLICA.

These Handbooks are reprints of the dissertations prefixed to the large catalogues of the chief divisions of works of art in the Museum at South Kensington; arranged and so far abridged as to bring each into a portable shape. The Lords of the Committee of Council on Education having determined on the publication of them, the editor trusts that they will meet the purpose intended; namely, to be useful, not alone for the collections at South Kensington but for other collections, by enabling the public at a trifling cost to understand something of the history and character of the subjects treated of.

The authorities referred to in each book are given in the large catalogues; where will also be found detailed descriptions of the very numerous examples in the South Kensington Museum.

W. M.

August, 1875.

MAIOLICA.

BY

C. DRURY E. FORTNUM, F.S.A.

WITH NUMEROUS WOODCUTS.



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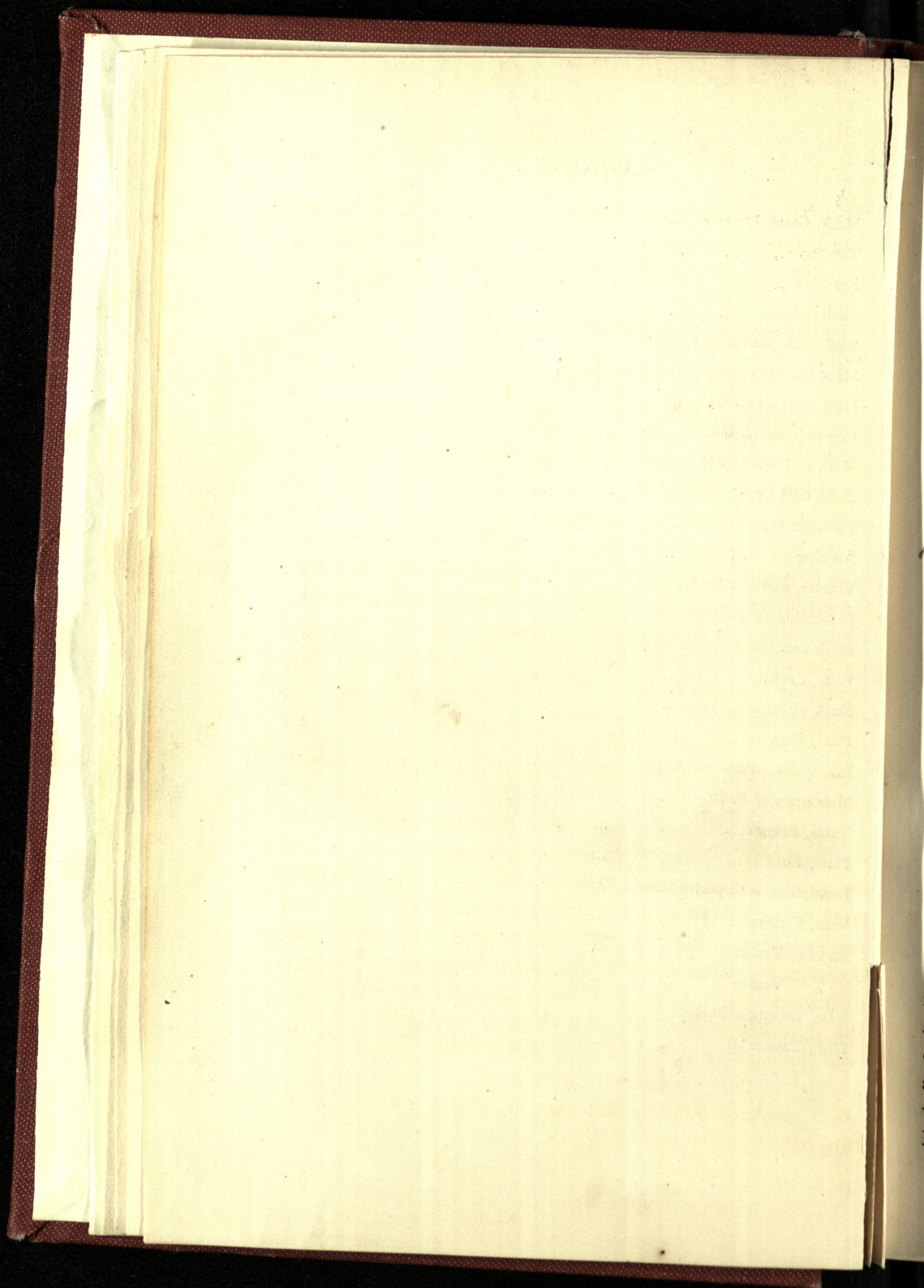
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MAIOLICA.

CHAPTER I.

It is right, first, to explain that in this dissertation we shall make constant use of two or three words borrowed from foreign languages; one is *botega* or *bottega*, implying something between a workshop and an artist's studio, which it would be difficult to express by a single English word: another is *fabrique*, meaning the private establishment of a master potter of that day, the idea of which cannot be so well conveyed by factory, pottery, or studio (itself an imported word), all of which are therein combined and modified.

The history of pottery and its manufacture is a subject of great extent; because from a very early period of human existence, known to us only by the tangible memorials of primitive inhabitants, the potter's art appears to have been practised. At first the vessels were of coarse clay, rude and sun-dried or ill-baked, and occasionally ornamented with concentric and transverse scratches; from which state they gradually developed to the exquisite forms and decoration of the Greek pottery; but it would seem that however universal the production of vessels of baked clay, the art of applying to them a vitreous covering or glaze was an invention which emanated from the east, from India or Egypt, Assyria or Babylon.

On this point Dr. Birch, in the introduction to his erudite work on ancient pottery, says: "The desire of rendering terra-cotta less porous, and of producing vessels capable of retaining liquids, gave rise to the covering of it with a vitreous enamel or glaze. The invention of glass has hitherto been generally attributed to the Phœnicians; but opaque glasses or enamels as old as the eighteenth dynasty, and enamelled objects as early as the fourth, have been found in Egypt. The employment of copper to produce a brilliant blue coloured enamel was very early, both in Babylonia and Assyria; but the use of tin for a white enamel, as recently discovered in the enamelled bricks and vases of Babylonia and Assyria, anticipated, by many centuries, the re-discovery of that process in Europe in the fifteenth century, and shows the early application of metallic oxides. This invention apparently remained for many centuries a secret among the eastern nations only, enamelled terra-cotta and glass forming articles of commercial export from Egypt and Phœnicia to every part of the Mediterranean. Among the Egyptians and Assyrians enamelling was used more frequently than glazing, and their works are consequently a kind of fayence, consisting of a loose frit or body, to which an enamel adheres, after only a slight fusion. After the fall of the Roman empire the art of enamelling terra-cotta disappeared among the Arab and Moorish races, who had retained a traditional knowledge of the process. The application of a transparent vitreous coating or glaze over the entire surface, like the varnish of a picture, is also referable to a high antiquity, and was universally adopted, either to enhance the beauty of single colours or to promote the combination of many. Innumerable fragments and remains of glazed vases, fabricated by the Greeks and Romans, not only prove the early use of glazing, but also exhibit in the present day many of the noblest efforts of the potter's art."

It is true that on the Greek, Etruscan, and Roman pottery a subdued and hardly apparent glazing was applied to the surface of the pieces, but it is so slight as to leave a barely appreciable

effect upon the eye, beyond that which might be produced by a mechanical polish, and so thinly laid on as almost to defy attempts at proving its nature by chemical investigation ; it is, however, supposed to have been produced by a dilute aluminous soda glass, without any trace of lead in its composition, the greater portion of which was absorbed into the substance of the piece, thereby increasing its hardness and leaving only a faint polish on the surface of the ware.

In Egypt and the east the use of a distinct glaze (*invetriatura* of the Italians), covering the otherwise more porous substance of the vessel, appears to have been known and to have arrived at great perfection at a very remote period. It was in fact a superior ware, equivalent to the porcelain of our days, and from the technical excellence of some of the smaller pieces has been frequently, but wrongly, so called.

It will perhaps be as well, before entering further into the consideration of the subject, to define and arrange the objects of our attention under general heads.

Pottery (*Fayence, Terraglia*), as distinct from porcelain, is formed of potter's clay mixed with marl of argillaceous and calcareous nature, and sand, variously proportioned, and may be classed under two divisions : Soft (*Fayence à pâte tendre*), and Hard (*Fayence à pâte dure*), according to the nature of the composition or the degree of heat under which it has been fired in the kiln. What is known generally in England as earthenware is soft, while stone ware, queen's ware, &c. are hard. The characteristics of the soft wares are a paste, or body, which may be scratched with a knife or file, and fusibility, generally, at the heat of a porcelain furnace.

These soft wares may be again divided into four subdivisions : unglazed, lustrous, glazed, and enamelled. Among the three first of these subdivisions may be arranged almost all the ancient pottery of Egypt, Greece, Etruria, and Rome ; as also the larger portion of that in general use among all nations during mediæval

and modern times. We shall be occupied with the glazed and enamelled wares: the first of which may be again divided into siliceous or glass glazed, and plumbeous or lead glazed.

In these subdivisions the foundation is in all cases the same. The mixed clay or "paste" or "body" (varied in composition according to the nature of the glaze to be superimposed) is formed by the hand, or on the wheel, or impressed into moulds; then slowly dried and baked in a furnace or stove, after which, on cooling, it is in a state to receive the glaze. This is prepared by fusing sand or other siliceous material with potash or soda to form a translucent glass, the composition, in the main, of the glaze upon siliceous wares. The addition of a varying but considerable quantity of the oxide of lead, by which it is rendered more easily fusible but still translucent, constitutes the glaze of plumbeous wares: and the further addition of the oxide of tin produces an enamel of an opaque white of great purity, which is the characteristic glazing of stanniferous or tin-glazed wares. In every case the vitreous substance is reduced to the finest powder by mechanical and other means, being milled with water to the consistency of cream; into this the dry and absorbent baked piece is dipped and withdrawn, leaving a coating of the material of the bath adhering to its surface. A second firing, when quite dry, fuses this coating into a glazed surface on the piece, rendering it lustrous and impermeable to liquids. The two former of these glazes may be variously coloured by the admixture of metallic oxides, as copper for green, iron for yellow, &c.; but they are nevertheless translucent, and show the natural colour of the baked clay beneath.

VITREOUS OR GLASS-GLAZED WARES.

The vitreous, silico-alkaline or glass-glazed wares, were of very ancient date and in all probability had their origin in the east, in Egypt, or India, or Phœnicia; indeed the discovery of glass, which has always been attributed to the latter country, would soon direct the potter's attention to a mode of covering his porous vessel of baked earth with a coating of the new material; but the ordinary

baked clay would not take or hold the glaze, which rose in bubbles and scaled off, refusing to adhere to the surface, and it became necessary to form the pieces of a mixed material, consisting of much siliceous sand, some aluminous earth, and probably small portion of alkali, thus rendering it of a nature approximating to that of the glaze, and to which the latter firmly adhered. In some instances, on the finer examples which may probably have been exposed to a higher temperature in the oven, the glaze and the body of the piece have become so incorporated as to produce a semi-translucent substance, analogous to some artificial porcelains. In its nature this glaze is translucent, and accordingly we find that when ornamented with designs, they are executed directly on the "biscuit" or unglazed surface of the piece, which then receives its vitreous covering through which they are apparent. By means of an oxide of copper the exquisite turquoise blue of ancient Egypt, "scarcely rivalled after thirty centuries of human experience," was produced. The green colour was, perhaps, given by means of another oxide of the same metal; violet by manganese or gold, yellow by silver or perhaps by iron, and the rarer red perhaps by the protoxide of copper. We also find that bricks and vases of similar glazing, brought to its greatest perfection in Egypt, were made by the Babylonians and Assyrians.

Throughout Babylonia the sites of ancient buildings afford fragments of glazed pottery. The glaze of those brought from Borsippa by the abbé Beauchamp, in 1790, was analysed and found to contain neither the oxides of lead nor tin, but to be an alkaline silicate with alumina, coloured by metallic oxides. A more recent analysis of Assyrian examples shows that with a base of silicate of soda or soda glass and oxide of tin the opaque white has been produced, being the earliest recorded example of "enamelled" ware. A small quantity of oxide of lead was also found in the blue glaze on tiles from Babylonia. At Warka, probably the ancient Ur of the Chaldees, Mr. Loftus discovered numerous coffins or sarcophagi, piled one upon another to the height of forty-five feet, of

peculiar form, and made of terra-cotta glazed with a siliceous glaze of bluish-green colour. They are formed somewhat like a shoe, an opening being left at the upper and wider end for the insertion of the body, and closed by an oval lid which, as well as the upper part of the coffin, is ornamented with figures and plants in relief. They are supposed to be of the Sassanian period.

The metallic lustre in decoration was applied, apparently at an early time, to pottery glazed with a siliceous coating, and appears to have established itself in Persia. On specimens from Arabia it is also found, and its use in combination with this glaze may possibly have preceded the manufacture of lustred wares coated with the stanniferous enamel, by the eastern potters of the Balearic islands, Spain, and Sicily.

In northern India, at Sind, and in Persia, wares are made at the present day of precisely the same character as the ancient pottery under consideration. Pieces from the former locality, which were exhibited at the International Exhibition of 1871, are composed of a sandy argillaceous frit, ornamented with pattern in cobalt blue beneath a siliceous glaze. Indeed their agreement in technical character with some of the pottery of the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians, and with that produced in Syria and Persia during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, is most remarkable. Persia also now produces inferior wares of the same class, specimens of which, as well as some of those from India, are preserved in the South Kensington museum: the engraving on the opposite page represents a wall tile (no. 623) of the seventeenth century.

We thus see how widely spread, and at how early a period, the use of this most ancient mode of glazing was established and brought to perfection. It was the parent of all those wares now known as Persian, Damascus, Rhodian, or Lindus.

PLUMBEOUS, OR LEAD GLAZED WARES.

The silico-plumbeous or lead-glazed wares were for many ages and still are the most common, and, in Europe, the most widely

spread class of pottery: indeed, throughout the northern and western countries lead, in combination with glass, seems to have



been the earliest and until the fifteenth century the only means known of glazing soft pottery.

We have seen that a certain amount of lead has been found

in some of the blue coloured glazes of Babylonia, and (says Dr. Percy) "probably employed as a flux;" if so, this might have been the spring of its general adoption for the purpose of producing a more easily fusible and therefore a more ready and more manageable coating; but in the east it does not seem to have supplanted the more elegant and purer siliceous glaze.

Fragments of Græco-Roman pottery from Tarsus, lamps from the neighbourhood of Naples, and other examples of a highly glazed pottery from various antique sites which have all the appearance of a plumbeous composition, are preserved in many collections, as at the Louvre, Naples, the British museum, &c. The paste of which these examples are formed is to all appearance an ordinary potter's clay, generally of a buff colour, and in no way similar in character to that of the Egyptian or Assyrian wares, glazed with a true glass. The adhesion of the vitreous coating to the surface, and its perfect adaptability to the irregularities of the shaped and moulded pieces, prove its affinity for the paste of which they are made, and indirectly that its composition is not the same as that of the Egyptian or Assyrian glaze.

It is worthy of remark that nearly all these specimens are found in the south of Europe, examples rarely occurring even at Rome; and, indeed, it is not improbable that the use of this glaze had hardly been adopted by the artistic potters before their art, together with all others, had degenerated under the Lower Empire. The superabundance of the precious metals and other rich material, more appreciated by the powerful than the priceless treasures which art had formed from common clay, and which had been the delight of a more refined state of society, led finally to a total neglect of the higher branches of ceramic manufacture.

It is not unlikely that plumbeous glaze may have been introduced by Greek or oriental potters into southern Italy. We learn from the monk Theophilus that the art of decorating fictile

vessels with vitreous colours was practised by the Byzantine Greeks, who would have carried it there. This statement, in all probability, refers to the lead glazed wares and not to the tin enamel, the former of which, as we have seen, was known earlier than his time to the potters of Tarsus, Pompeii, &c., and it is reasonable to believe that the art may have been preserved in Byzantium when lost, or nearly lost, in Italy. Perhaps, in combination with incised ornament the use of this glaze never ceased in that country from the eighth and ninth centuries until the introduction or discovery of the stanniferous enamel in the fifteenth century; and we find that the earliest glazed wares of that country, the *sgraffiati*, the painted, and the *mezza maiolica* wares, are covered with this description of vitreous surface.

In the eleventh century churches built in various places were decorated with discs and "ciotole" of glazed and painted terracotta. The researches of the abbé Cochet at Bouteilles have shown that glazed pottery was in use in the north of France in the Anglo-norman period of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, or perhaps even in earlier time. Examples of glazed and painted tiles of the fourteenth century are preserved in the British museum. As before stated, this glaze is composed of silica with varying proportions of potash or soda and of oxide of lead, by which addition it is rendered more easily fusible but remains transparent.

To obtain a white surface was, however, desirable, the colour of the paste beneath the glaze being generally of a dull red or buff and ill-adapted as a ground for the display of coloured ornamentation. To supply this want, before the invention of the tin enamel, an intervening process was adopted. A white argillaceous earth of the nature of pipeclay was purified and milled with water, and thus applied over the coarser surface of the piece in the same manner as the glaze; again dried, or slightly fixed by fire, it was ready to receive the translucent coat through which the white "slip" or "engobe" became

apparent. It is easy to conceive that by scratching a design or pattern through this white applied surface to the darker clay beneath, before fixing in the fire, a ready mode of decoration presented itself without the use of colour, to be covered with but visible through the glaze; hence the early incised or "sgraffiato" ware, one of the primitive modes of decorating glazed pottery.

Passeri states that pottery works existed from remote periods in the neighbourhood of Pesaro, as proved by remains of furnaces and fragments of Roman time and tiles with the stamp of Theodoric; that during the dark ages the manufacture was neglected, but that it revived after 1300, and that it then became the fashion in that city to adorn the church towers and façades with discs and "bacini" of coloured and glazed earthenware; a practice which had been in use at Pisa and other cities as early as the eleventh century. The origin of this custom has been much discussed; and the reader will find an account of it in the introduction to the detailed catalogue of Maiolica in the South Kensington collection. Occasionally, or rather frequently, circular and square slabs of porphyry and serpentine were used on the same building, concurrently with the glazed earthenware, as on the tower of Sta. Maria Maggiore at Rome; and, indeed, this mode of enrichment attached to the architecture of the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries is in accordance with that produced by the enamelled discs and inlaid stones on processional crosses and church plate of the same period.

The only instance, observed by the writer, of the occurrence of these "bacini" of glazed ware in domestic architecture is seen over the windows of the palazzo Fava in Bologna. This style of decoration ceased entirely during the course of the fourteenth century.

Passeri instances the use of glaze on tiles upon a tomb in Bologna, opposite the church of S. Domenico, dated about 1100; and he further states, but we know not upon what authority, that

it was about the year 1300 that the method of covering the clay with a "slip" or "engobe" of white earth, or the coarser earth of Verona, was first adopted. Slightly baked, it was glazed with "marzacotto" (oxide of lead and glass), applied wet and again fired; and this glaze was variously coloured yellow, green, black, and blue, by iron, copper, manganese, and cobalt. A similar method of coating the rough and porous baked clay seems to have been known also at a very early period in the north of Europe, and to have been in use throughout France, Germany, and England.

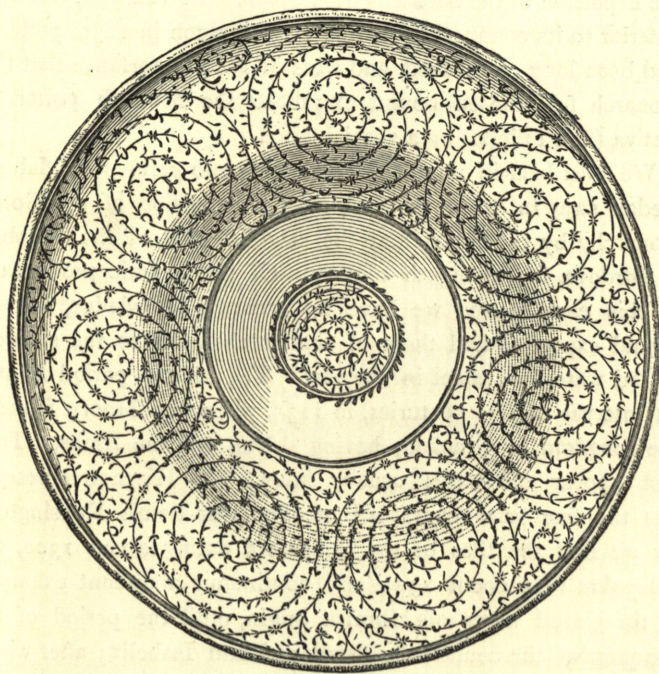
CHAPTER II.

ENAMELLED OR STANNIFEROUS GLAZED WARES.

It was found that by the addition of a certain portion of the oxide of tin to the composition of glass and oxide of lead the character of the glaze entirely alters. Instead of being translucent it becomes, on fusion, an opaque and beautifully white enamel, the intervening process of covering the surface of the clay with a stratum of white earth before glazing being unnecessary. It, moreover, was found to afford a better ground for the application of coloured ornament. The process of application was the same as for the "slip;" after immersion in the enamel bath, and subsequent drying, the painting is applied upon the absorbent surface; the piece being then subjected to the fire which, at one application, fixes the colours and liquifies the glaze. This "enamelled" pottery (*émaillée*) is by far the more important group of the glazed wares, being susceptible of decoration by the lustre pigments, as well as by painting in colours of great delicacy; and it comprises the Hispano-moresque, the real Maiolica, and the perfected earthenware of Italy and other countries.

It is true that the first trace of the application of oxide of tin to produce a white opaque glazed surface is to be met with upon Babylonian or Assyrian bricks, but we are disposed to think that it was then merely used as a pigment to produce a white colour, and not as an application to pottery for the production of a white opaque glaze capable of receiving coloured enrichment by painting in other pigments. A corroboration of this opinion would seem to exist in the fact that throughout Asia Minor, Syria, Persia, and

Egypt, a purely stanniferous glaze on pottery has never been generally adopted, or taken the place of that simple and beautiful siliceous coating, so dexterously applied and with such richness of effect upon the Persian and Damascus earthenware. Engraved is an example of an early Damascus plate (no. 6590), at South



Kensington. Perhaps isolated and lying dormant in remote localities for centuries, its use may have been learned by the Arabs, for its next appearance is upon fragments of tiling apparently of their manufacture or fashioned under their influence. How the knowledge of this enamel travelled, when and where it was first used, and to what extent applied, is still doubtful. We meet with an occasional fragment generally upon mural decoration of uncertain date on various Arab sites, till at length it

becomes palpably appreciable in the Moorish potteries of Spain and of the Balearic islands. The baron J. Ch. Davillier, in his excellent work on pottery, states that he has not been able to discover any piece which could reasonably be ascribed to a date anterior to the fourteenth century, some two hundred years after the expulsion of the Saracens from Spain. In Valencia, however, anterior to its conquest by Jayme I. of Arragon in 1239, potteries had been long established, and were of such importance that that monarch felt himself bound to protect the Moorish potters of Xativa (San Filippo) by a special edict.

We must bear in mind that there were two periods of Mahomedan sway in Spain, the first on the expulsion of the Gothic monarchy by the Arabs and the establishment of the Caliphate at Cordova, in the eighth century. Of the ceramic productions of this early period we have no accurate knowledge, but we should expect to find them of similar character to the siliceous glazed wares prevalent in the east. The second period is after an interval of five centuries, in 1235, when the Moors founded the kingdom of Granada, having driven out the Arabs. Then first appear the wares usually known as Hispano-moresque, like the fine vase (engraved) no. 8968, at South Kensington; for we find the tiles of the Alhambra dating about 1300, the Alhambra vase about 1320, and continuous abundant examples of tin glazed wares of Moorish origin, until the period of the conquest of the country by Ferdinand and Isabella; after which the pottery becomes more purely Spanish and speedily declines.

Mr. Marryat remarks, in reference to the second or Moorish period, that the art of the new invaders had the same origin as the old, but as we have no specimens known to have been of the earlier or Arabian period we cannot accept this verdict as conclusive. Moreover, some confusion has arisen in classing together the glass glazed or siliceous pottery, with or without metallic lustre, and the Moresque wares produced in Spain, which are so

distinctly characteristic as being enamelled with the oxide of tin.



We particularly refer to those somewhat rare examples of early siliceous pottery, like the deep Rhodian plate next engraved, some

enriched with metallic lustre, others without, the designs upon all of which are eminently Arabian or Saracenic, unreadable mock Arabic inscriptions occurring (as in the textile fabrics of the same period) among the ornaments; as in the thirteenth century vase in the woodcut, p. 17. Such are the tiles of early date from various



places in Persia and Arabia. Similar wares, of which there are specimens at South Kensington, are supposed to have been made by oriental potters in Sicily but it is difficult to say at what time. That island was conquered by the Saracens in 827. Again, there is another variety of pottery of Moresque character and ornamentation with vermicular pattern in copper lustre on a seemingly stanniferous glaze, which is ascribed to Moorish potters

who went to Sicily and established works at Calata Gírone in the fourteenth century.

It is not improbable that the existence in Spain of tin ores in



considerable abundance may have accidentally led to the discovery or to the adoption of the stanniferous enamel, obtained by an admixture of the oxide of that metal with glass and oxide of lead. We have no positive proof of its use on pottery at an earlier date in any other country, since the period of the Babylonian bricks.

May there not be some truth in the story of the Majorcan dishes built into the Pisan towers, and that the single specimen of "Persian" ware found by the writer on the church of Sta. Cecilia in that city, which in all probability was placed there early in the twelfth century, may be one of the dishes brought home by the Pisans, at a time anterior to the use of the tin enamel in Majorca?

There is generally a foundation for fabulous stories, and it is not unlikely that some few of those trophies were so applied; the more so as the taste for such architectural decoration prevailed at that period. At the same time there can be no doubt that many of the bacini adorning churches in various parts of Italy, including Pisa, were of native Italian manufacture, as would seem probable from their compositions and designs. Engravings of these, and of the fragment of oriental ware above alluded to, are published in the *Archæologia*, vol. xlii. We are indebted to the council of the Society of antiquaries for permission (see next page) to use the latter block.

The earliest traces of the use of stanniferous enamel glaze in Europe, known to us, is always in connection with a decoration, produced by the reduction of certain metallic salts in the reverberatory furnace, leaving a thin film upon the surface, which gives that beautiful and rich effect known as *reflet métallique*, *nacré*, *cangiante*, *rubino*, *reverberato*, &c., and in England as lusted ware. In Italy the use of a metallic lustre was apparently known and practised previous to the introduction of the tin enamel, for we have abundant examples of early "mezza-maiolica" from the potteries of Pesaro or Gubbio, glazed only with the oxide of lead and glass, and which are brilliantly lusted with the metallic colours. None of these can, however, be referred to an earlier date than the latter half of the fifteenth century.

Of whom, then, did the Italian potters learn this art? We have no answer to the question in any historical record, and we are forced to infer that the name by which this lusted ware was known at the time and in the country of its production, reflected that of

the place from which it was derived. Accordingly we find that the coarser lead glazed lusted ware was known as "mezza-maiolica," while that more nearly resembling its original, by the use of the tin enamel, was known as "maiolica." That the Moorish potters of Majorca conveyed this knowledge, and that the Italians named their ware after that of the island, would seem a reasonable conclusion. M. Jacquemart, however, thinks it equally probable that although the Majorcan wares were well known in Italy, this art may really have been communicated by Persian potters, or their pupils, coming to the eastern ports of Italy; and that the style of decoration on the early Italian lusted wares is more Persian than Moresque. This would also in some measure explain why the lustrous colours were used at some potteries anterior to the adop-



tion of the stanniferous enamel. The woodcut represents a bowl at South Kensington, no. 503, possibly of this manufacture, and of great rarity. In date it is somewhat late ; about 1490.



The general term "*Maiolica*," also spelt "*Majolica*," has long been and is still erroneously applied to all varieties of glazed earthenware of Italian origin. We have seen that it was not so originally but that the term was restricted to the lustred wares, which resemble in that respect those of the island from which they had long been imported into Italy. It is a curious fact, proving their estimation in that country, that nearly all the specimens of Hispano-moresque pottery which adorn our cabinets and enrich our museums have been procured in Italy ; comparatively few pieces having been found in Spain.

Scaliger states in reference to the Italian pottery as comparable with the porcelain of China, that the former derived its name from Majorca, of which the wares are most excellent. Fabio Ferrari also, in his work upon the origin of the Italian language, states his belief "that the use of *majolica*, as well as the name, came from Majorca, which the ancient Tuscan writers called *Maiolica*." Thus Dante writes :—"Tra l'isola di Cipri e *Maiolica* ;" showing the

then mode of spelling the name of the island, and it would seem but natural to distinguish an imitation of its produce as "à la Maiolica."

The "mezza-maiolica" was the coarser ware, formed of potter's earth, covered with a white "slip" upon which the subject was painted; then glazed with the common "marza-cotto" or lead glaze, over which the lustre pigments were applied. The "maiolica," on the other hand, was the tin enamelled ware similarly lustred. As before stated, these terms were originally used with reference only to the lustred wares, but towards the middle of the sixteenth century they seem to have been generally applied to the glazed earthenware of Italy. We think with M. Jacquemart, M. Darcel, Mr. J. C. Robinson, and others, that the word *maiolica* should be again restricted to the lustred wares, although in Italy and elsewhere it is habitually used to designate all the numerous varieties of glazed earthenware, with the exception of the more common "terraglia" and in distinction from porcelain.

The Germans ascribe the discovery of the tin enamel glazing to a potter of Schelestadt, in Alsace, whose name is unknown but who died in the year 1283; and in the convent of St. Paul at Leipzig is a frieze of large glazed tiles, with heads in relief, the date of which is stated to be 1207. The potters' art is said to have developed itself in that country at an earlier period than in Italy; rilievo architectural decorations, monuments with figures in high relief, and other works of great artistic merit having been executed in 1230 at Breslau, where there is a monument to Henry IV. of Silesia who died in 1290, an important work in this material. Later, at Nuremberg, the elder Veit Hirschvögel was born in 1441, and by him the use of the tin glaze was known. Specimens ascribed to his hand and dating from 1470 are preserved in museums. At Strehla a pulpit of glazed terra-cotta is of the date 1565, and at Salzburg is the wonderful chimney-piece of the fifteenth century, still in its original position in the Schloss.

At that time, also, Hans Kraut, of Villengen in Swabia, produced good works, but it is probable that many of these larger examples are covered with an admirably manipulated green or brown glaze which is produced without the admixture of tin.

In Italy history has always awarded the honour of its discovery to Luca della Robbia, whose first great work was executed in 1438; and however recent observation may lead to the assumption that its use was known in the Italian potteries before his time, there can be no doubt that his was not merely an application of a well-known process to a new purpose, but that he really did invent an enamel of peculiar whiteness and excellence, better adapted to his purpose and of somewhat different composition from that in use at any of the potteries of his time.

CHAPTER III.

WE have already seen that in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries native wares were produced in various places, some of which still exist in the towers and façades of churches, and of a palace at Bologna. These are lead glazed, rudely painted or with single colours, and in some instances "sgraffiato" proving that the use of a white "slip," or "engobe" was known in Italy at that period, as affirmed by Passeri, who further asserts that in 1300 the art assumed a more decorative character, under the then lords of Pesaro, the Malatestas. Having thus attained an even opaque white surface the development of its artistic decoration steadily advanced. The colours used were yellow, green, blue, and black, to which we may add a dull brownish red, noticed on some of the Pisan "bacini." Passeri states that the reflection of the sun's rays from the concave surfaces of these "bacini" at Pesaro was most brilliant, and hence it has been wrongly inferred that they were enriched with metallic lustre. We believe that this effect may arise from iridescence on the surface of the soft lead glaze, easily decomposed by the action of the atmosphere in the neighbourhood of the sea.

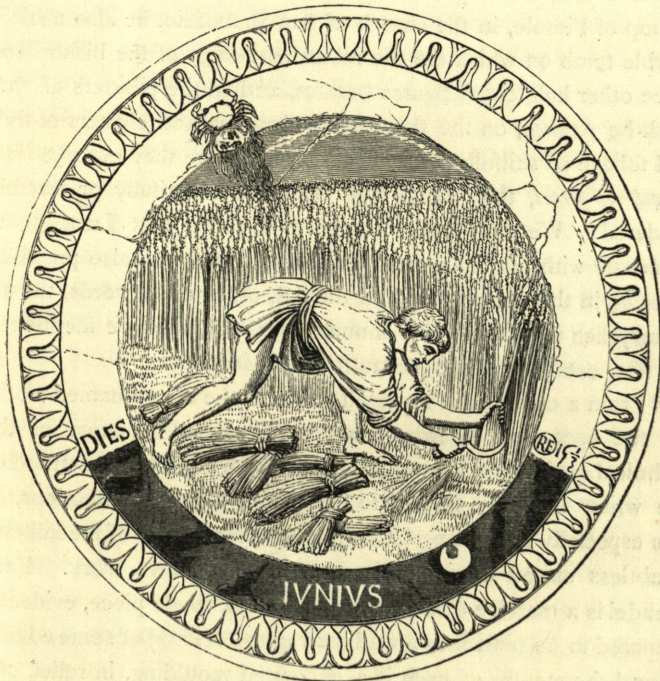
Pieces exist, of considerable merit, which may be ascribed to an earlier period than that on which we find the earliest date. A votive plaque preserved in the museum of the hôtel Cluny, at Paris, has the sacred monogram surrounded by the legend *Nicolabs · de · Ragnolis · ad · honorem · dei · et · Sancti · Michaelis · fecit · fieri · ano · 1475*. We have always considered this plaque as of Faenza, but it would seem that MM. Jacquemart

and Darcel are disposed to ascribe it to Caffaggiolo. The next example, two years later in sequence of date, is in the possession of Mr. Cook ; it represents the Virgin seated on a throne in an architectural framing, and holding the Child ; it has all the characteristics of a Tuscan origin and the glaze appears to be stanniferous. We next have the Faenza plate in the Correr museum at Venice, dated 1482, followed by the plaque ascribed to Forlì, 1489, and one of Faenza, 1491. Other pieces, dated 1486 and 1487, are in other collections. But we have no record or dated example of Italian pottery, coated with the stanniferous enamel, previous to the first important production by Luca della Robbia in 1438.

M. Jacquemart is of opinion that the use of the tin enamel was known on pottery in Italy previous to its application to sculpture by that artist, and in this opinion Mr. Robinson agrees ; yet it is remarkable that no record of such knowledge has descended to us. No enamelled product of the early fabriques of Faenza or Caffaggiolo bears an earlier date, nor of that of Pesaro where decoration by means of the lustre pigments is believed to have preceded their application on enamelled wares ; whereas the use of the tin enamel by Luca on flat painted surfaces is proved by the *tondo* on the church of Or San Michele, the lunette over a door at the Opera del Duomo, and the tiles on the tomb of Benozzo Federighi, bishop of Fiesole, now in the church of S. Francesco de Paolo below Bellosguardo, as Florentine evidences ; and the twelve circular discs, on which are painted allegorical figures of the twelve months, are also to be referred to at South Kensington.

Mr. J. C. Robinson, in his catalogue of Italian sculpture, has given a notice of the life and works of Luca della Robbia and his family, and a description of the specimens ascribed to them and possessed by the museum at South Kensington ; the majority of these rank as works of sculpture, but among the rest are the *tondi*, here mentioned, a wood-cut from one of which we introduce. They

are, in fact, circular plaques of enamelled pottery painted on the plain surface with allegorical representations of the months, in all probability by the hand of Luca della Robbia himself. We



quote Mr. Robinson's description of them from page 59 of that catalogue:—

"Nos. 7632-7643. Luca della Robbia. A series of twelve circular medallions, in enamelled terra-cotta, painted in *chiar'oscuro*, with impersonations of the twelve months. Diameter of each, 1 foot 10½ inches. Vasari tells us that 'Luca sought to invent a method of painting figures and historical representations on flat surfaces of terra-cotta, which, being executed in vitrified enamels, would secure them an endless duration; of this he made an

experiment on a medallion, which is above the tabernacle of the four saints on the exterior of Or San Michele, on the plane surface of which he delineated the instruments and emblems of the builder's arts, accompanied with beautiful ornaments. For the bishop of Fiesole, in the church of San Brancazio, he also made a marble tomb on which are the recumbent effigy of the bishop and three other half-length figures besides, and in the pilasters of that work he *painted*, on the flat, certain festoons and clusters of fruit and foliage so skilfully and naturally, that, were they even *painted in oil on panel*, they could not be more beautifully or forcibly rendered.' We have here a record of the fact that Luca, simultaneously with his enamelled terra-cotta sculptures, also practised *painting* in the same vehicle on the flat, or, in other words, the art of majolica painting. The monumental works before mentioned are now extant to attest the truth of this account.

"From a careful and repeated study of the above-named works on the spot, and likewise from the internal evidence of the technical qualities of the vehicle, terra-cotta, enamel pigments, &c., the writer has now to add to the list of Luca's productions, in this especially interesting branch, the present series of medallions, doubtless united originally in a grand decorative work. Each roundel is a massive disc of terra-cotta, of a single piece, evidently prepared to be built into a wall (or vaulted ceiling) of some edifice. Round the margin of each is a decorated moulding, in relief, of a characteristic Della Robbia type. The surface within the narrow border is flat or plane, and the designs are painted in two or three grisaille tints on a blue ground, of the usual quiet sober tint affected in all the backgrounds and plane surfaces of the rilievo subjects. These consist of single figures of *contadini* or husbandmen, impersonating the agricultural operations of the Florentine country, characteristic of each month of the year; and although invested with a certain artistic charm of expression, the various figures, each of which exhibits a different individual character, may be taken as life portraits of the sturdy Tuscan peasants of

the day. A band or *fascia* forming an inner border round each subject, is ingeniously and fancifully divided into two unequal halves, one being of a lighter tint than the general ground of the composition, and the other half darker, thus indicating the night and the day; the mean duration of each for every month, being accurately computed, set off on the band accordingly, and noted in written characters on the upper or daylight part, whilst the name of the month is written in large capital letters at the bottom in white, on the dark ground of the nocturnal portion. The sun pouring down a cone of yellow rays, accompanied by the sign of the zodiac proper to each month, is also seen on the left of the upper part of each margin, and the moon on the lower half opposite to him." The author gives further proof that these medallions are the work of Luca della Robbia, believing the fact to be as certain as anything not absolutely authenticated can be.

Luca della Robbia was born about the year 1400, and his name must ever be associated with the discovery or adaptation on a large scale, and improvement in composition, of stanniferous enamel. That the nature of this enamel is different from what was used upon other pottery of the time may be seen by a comparison of the two surfaces. The greater degree of opacity and solidity in the former is a marked variation from that in general use; so with the surface of his painted tiles. Perhaps the earlier productions of the Caffaggiolo furnaces approach the nearest to it. There is no piece, seemingly, of the production of a Florentine or Tuscan pottery with a date before 1477, and this example would appear to be tin-glazed. With that exception, the first pieces surfaced with the stanniferous enamel are ascribed to the Caffaggiolo pottery and are dated 1507 and 1509, some seventy years subsequent to its first recorded use by Luca della Robbia; and we have no specimens which can with any probability be ascribed to a period within a quarter of a century of its habitual application by him. We cannot, therefore, find the slightest evidence to dis-

prove the assertion of Vasari and others that Luca was the discoverer, for Italy, of this important improvement in the glazing of earthenware vessels. It is not, however, unreasonable to suppose that its composition may have been communicated to him by one of the Moorish potters from Spain, and that, acting upon this communication, he made a series of experiments resulting in the perfection to which he attained, and which result was guarded as a family secret by two succeeding generations.

A modification of this composition, perhaps also learnt from Hispano-moorish potters, became gradually known and adopted at various fabriques, spreading throughout the potteries of Italy, France, &c. We are inclined to M. Jacquemart's opinion that it first came into use at Caffaggiolo, the fabrique established under the influence of the Medici family, but cannot consent to his suggestion that Luca learnt there the composition of the enamel. We agree with Mr. Robinson in giving the precedence, or at any rate an equality in point of age, to Faenza, and in ascribing to that place certain figures and groups in alto-rilievo, bearing inscriptions in Gothic letters, the modelling and design of which are more characteristic of the north of the Apennines than of the Tuscan valley.

Andrea della Robbia, to whom his uncle's mantle descended, also painted occasionally on plane surfaces, as may be seen on tiles which cover the flat surface of a "*lavabo*" in the sacristy of the church of Sta. Maria Novella, in Florence. We would merely further note the fact that in 1520 the art was in decadence under the hand of Giovanni the son of Andrea, Luca's nephew, and that during the first quarter of that century various imitators produced inferior works in the same style, copying the models of the Della Robbia and the works of some other sculptors. By Giovanni's brother Girolamo it was introduced into France, where the château de Madrid was decorated by him under the patronage of Francis the first.

In Italy, Agostino di Antonio di Duccio, said to be a pupil of

Luca, worked at Perugia in 1459-61, where he executed enamelled bas-reliefs on the façade of the church of S. Bernardino, and in S. Domenico. Pier Paolo di Agapito da Sassoferrato is said to have erected an altar in this manner in the church of the Cappuccini in Arceria, in the diocese of Sinigaglia, in the year 1513. He was also a painter. An able modeller as well as artist potter Maestro Giorgio Andreoli, of Gubbio, also appears to have executed works in the manner of the Della Robbia. The practice of enamelling large works modelled in terra-cotta would seem to have gone out of repute before the end of the first half of the sixteenth century; not perhaps so much from the secret of the glaze being known only, as we are told, to the descendants of the Della Robbia family, as from the want of demand for works in that material.

From the increased use of decorative tiles and the encouragement afforded to the production of artistic pottery, furnaces and botege had been established in various parts of northern and central Italy, particularly in Romagna, in Tuscany, and in the lordship of Urbino, where the manufacture was patronized at an early time by the ruling family, as also by the Sforza at Pesaro. Here the first use of the metallic lustre would appear to have been developed; but we have even less historical evidence of the date of its earliest introduction than in the case of the tin enamel. Before that great improvement was adopted by any of the potteries in Italy, the pearly, the golden, and the ruby lustre colours were produced at Pesaro, and perhaps at Gubbio where it subsequently attained its greatest perfection. Pesaro being a coast town of the Adriatic, and one where furnaces had long existed, would form a ready asylum for oriental workmen fleeing from persecution in their own country. It is reasonable to suppose that from them the use of these metallic pigments was acquired, and accordingly we find early pieces presumably of this fabrique, the decorative "motif" on which is eastern to a marked degree. Painted wares had been produced anterior to the use of the metallic pigments,

and among them specimens are occasionally found betraying Persian influence in their design.

The outlines on the "mezza maiolica" of this period were traced in manganese black or zaffre blue, with which last the shadings are also indicated ; the flesh is left white. A certain rigidity but truthfulness is observable in the design, crude and



wanting in relief, but precise and free from timidity. A moresque border frequently surrounds a coat-of-arms, portrait busts in profile of contemporary princes, or that of a saint or heathen goddess ; or the sacred monogram ; or, again (betrothal gifts) a heart with joined hands, as in the woodcut ; or portraits of ladies with a ribbon or banderole, on which the name is inscribed with a complimentary adjective as "bella," "diva," and the like ; such are the principal subjects of these early *bacili*.

The admirable "madreperla" lustre of these pieces, changing

in colour and effect with every angle at which the light is reflected from their brilliant surface, is the leading characteristic and special beauty of this class of wares, which must have been in great request and produced in considerable quantity. Pesaro and Diruta lay claim to their production, and each fabrique has its champions.



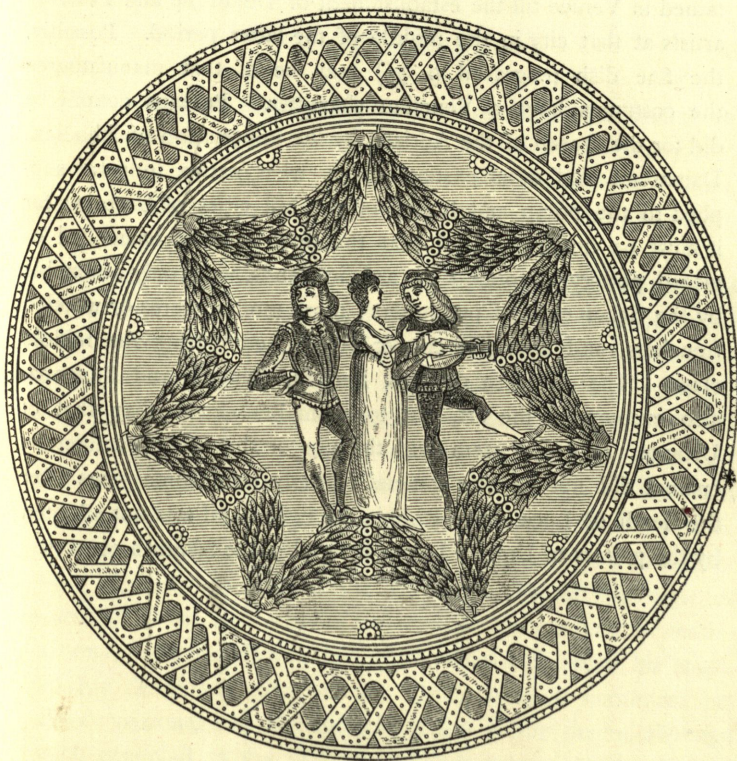
We are inclined to ascribe the earlier and more important productions to Pesaro, and are disposed to consider the Diruta fabrique as a subsequent and less important source of supply in respect to the quality of the wares. These *bacili* are nearly all of the same size and form; large heavy dishes of flesh-coloured clay with deep sunk centres and a projecting circular "giretto" behind, forming a foot or base; this is invariably pierced with two lateral holes,

for the purpose of introducing a cord by which to suspend them to the wall, thus proving that they were looked upon more as decorative pieces (*piatti di pompa*) than for general use upon the table; the back is covered by a coarse yellow glaze, the front having a surface whitened by slip and painted as above-mentioned. The rim is sometimes ornamented in compartments (*a quartiere*), or with chequered, "chevroné" or imbricated patterns, or conventional flowers. Engraved (p. 31) is a fine plateau of early date: no. 4078 at South Kensington.

The larger pieces of the period made at various places have a certain general resemblance in the clumsy fashion, the dry archaic style of drawing executed in blue outline, and in the diaper patterns of the border. Glazed wares of polychrome and subject decoration were no doubt produced before the introduction of the lustre colours and, judging from examples which have come down to us, the forms seem to have been partially derived from Persian, Hispano-moresque, and other oriental originals; deep dishes with angular sides and narrow rims; others with a wide border or side sloping at a gradual angle from the small circular centre. The gothic element is, however, traceable on some early pieces of north Italian origin.

A more careful investigation of the records of Italian families, and the archives of the many towns at which potteries formerly existed, might throw considerable light on the history and establishment of the various fabriques and the marks and characteristics of their productions; but at present we can only form an approximate opinion by comparison of the examples existing in collections with signed examples by the same hand. We agree in believing with Passeri that the potteries of Pesaro were of very early date, probably anterior to Gubbio, and think that full weight should be given to his statement that the use of the lustre pigments was introduced from the former to the latter fabrique, where it attained to unsurpassed excellence under the able management and improvement of M^o. Giorgio but whether the furnaces of Faenza and

Forh were of earlier or subsequent establishment to that of Pesaro is still a matter of conjecture, and of Caffaggiolo and others we have no record. Of the antiquity of these last there can be no doubt. But although producing at the latter end of the fifteenth



and early in the sixteenth centuries some of the most exquisite examples of artistic decoration and of the perfection of manufacture in this class of ceramics, we are unable to find a single proof of the use of the lustrous metallic tints, or a single example of pottery so enriched, which can with probability be ascribed to

the Faenza furnaces. The same remark applies to other potteries on the northern side of the Apennines.

The Piedmontese and Lombard cities do not appear to have encouraged the potter's art to an equal extent in the 15th and 16th centuries, neither can we learn of any excellence attained in Venice till the establishment of Durantine and Pesarese artists at that city in the middle of the latter period. Possibly, the fine dish (engraved p. 33) may be of that manufacture: the costumes have a Venetian character. Perhaps commerce did for the Queen of the Adriatic by the importation of Rhodian, Damascus, and other eastern wares, what native industry supplied to the pomp and luxury of the hill cities of Umbria; for it must be borne in mind that the finer sorts of enamelled or glazed pottery, decorated by artistic hands, were only attainable by the richer class of purchasers; more modest wares or wooden trenchers, and ancestral copper vessels, contenting the middle class. The northern duchies, Ferrara, Rimini, and Ravenna, also encouraged the art, but to a smaller extent than that of Urbino. It would seem that the use of the white stanniferous enamel did not become general in Italy until some years after the death of Luca della Robbia, in 1481; and was not adopted by the potters of Umbria before the end of the fifteenth century.

CHAPTER IV.

THE history of the development, perfection, and decline of the ceramic art of the renaissance in Italy is so intimately connected with and centred round that of the dukedom of Urbino, that in tracing its progress we must also briefly call to memory the fortunes and the failures of that noble house.

In 1443 what had been but an unimportant mountain fief was erected into a duchy, and the house of Montefeltro ruled a fair territory in the person of the infamous Oddantonio, the first duke of Urbino. On his violent death in 1444 Federigo, his illegitimate brother, succeeded to the dukedom. Of enlightened mind, as well as of martial capacity, he developed the native capabilities of the country and gathered about him at the court of Urbino the science and learning of the period. He built a noble castellated palace at Urbino, for the embellishment of which he invited the leading artists of the day. A patron of all art, and a great collector, he encouraged the manufacture of the maiolica wares which flourished under his reign. On his death in 1482 his son Guidobaldo I. continued his father's patronage to the ceramic artists of the duchy, although much occupied in the Italian wars consequent on the French invasion by Charles VIII. Passeri states that fine maiolica (by which he means that covered with the tin enamel) was introduced into Pesaro in 1500; and there is some reason to believe that the new process came from Tuscany. It differed materially in composition and manufacture from the "mezza majolica" wares to which it was very superior, and was known as "Por-

cellana," a name applied at that period in Italy to the choicer description of enamelled earthenware. Passeri also states that in the inventory of the ducal palaces a large quantity of painted "majolica" vases were included under this name. The superior whiteness of the enamel, more nearly approaching to that of oriental porcelain, was probably the reason for its adoption; but we must not confound the term as used in this sense with its technical meaning in reference to a decorative design known as "a porcellana."

The introduction of the new enamel, which afforded a better ground for painting, did not cause the use of the bright metallic colours and prismatic glaze to be relinquished at those potteries where it had become established, but it appears to have stimulated a development in the artistic productions of other places, the wares of which before that period were less attractive. The bottega of Maestro Giorgio at Gubbio seems to have been at this time the great centre of the process of embellishment with the golden and ruby metallic lustres; and, indeed, we have little or no knowledge of artistic pottery produced at that fabrique which is not so enriched. From some technicality in the process of the manufacture, some local advantage, or some secret in the composition, almost a monopoly of its use was established at Gubbio, for we have the evidence of well-known examples that from the end of the first to the commencement of the last quarter of the 15th century many pieces painted by the artists of Pesaro, Urbino, and Castel Durante, were sent there to receive the additional enrichment of the lustre colours. Pieces may be seen in collections signed in blue by the artist Francesco Xanto and others which have been subsequently lusted at Gubbio, and again signed in the metallic pigment by the "maestro" of that bottega. At Diruta also its use appears to have been extensive though not to so exclusive a degree nor on wares of such high character as at Gubbio, neither are we enabled by

the possession of examples to conclude that the works of other fabriques were sent to Diruta for the additional embellishment.

The crude drawing of the earlier ware improved very slowly; in 1502 tiles executed for the palace at Pesaro were still of sorry design; but it developed by the introduction of half tints, the colouring of the drapery, and in the composition of the groups of figures, inspired by the works of Timoteo della Vite and other artists of the Umbrian school. At Pesaro the art appears to have attained its highest perfection at the bottega of the Lanfranco family, about 1540-45.

The establishment of the ducal Court at Urbino naturally drew more favour to the potteries of that city, and of its near neighbour Castel Durante. The latter of these appears also to have been a seat of this industry from very remote times, and not only to have furnished large quantities of glazed earthenware but also artistic works of the highest merit. Castel Durante not only produced fine wares at home but artists of great ability emigrated from her, establishing themselves at various places. Hence originally came the Fontana family, the most important producers of the higher class of decorative pottery at Urbino. At Venice Francesco Pieragnolo in 1545, accompanied by his father Gian-Antonio da Pesaro, formed a bottega; but his wares are not among the earliest dated pieces made in that city, where we know that M^o Ludovico was producing admirable works five years previously, and M^o Jacomo da Pesaro in 1542. A member of the Fontana family, Camillo, younger brother of the celebrated *Orazio*, went to Florence, and another M^o Camillo to Ferrara in 1567, by the request of the then reigning duke, Alfonso II.; in 1600 we find that Maestro Diomede Durante had a pottery at Rome, producing pieces painted by Gio. Paulo Savino, in the style of the Urbino grotesques on white ground, which had been brought to such perfection by the Fontana family. Another artist of this family, Guido di

Savino, is stated to have previously established himself at Antwerp.

At Urbino and Gubbio the shaped pieces, the vases, cisterns, &c. were of large size admirably modelled, as, for instance, the fine vase at South Kensington, no. 515, in the woodcut; they were also richly "istoriata" with subjects from sacred and pro-



fane history, poetry, &c.: the produce of the celebrated Fontana botega being, perhaps, the most important of them. Here also worked the able artist Francesco Xanto, from 1530 to 1541 (latterly in the pottery of Francesco Silvano), so many of whose painted pieces were subsequently decorated with ruby and gold lustre at Gubbio.

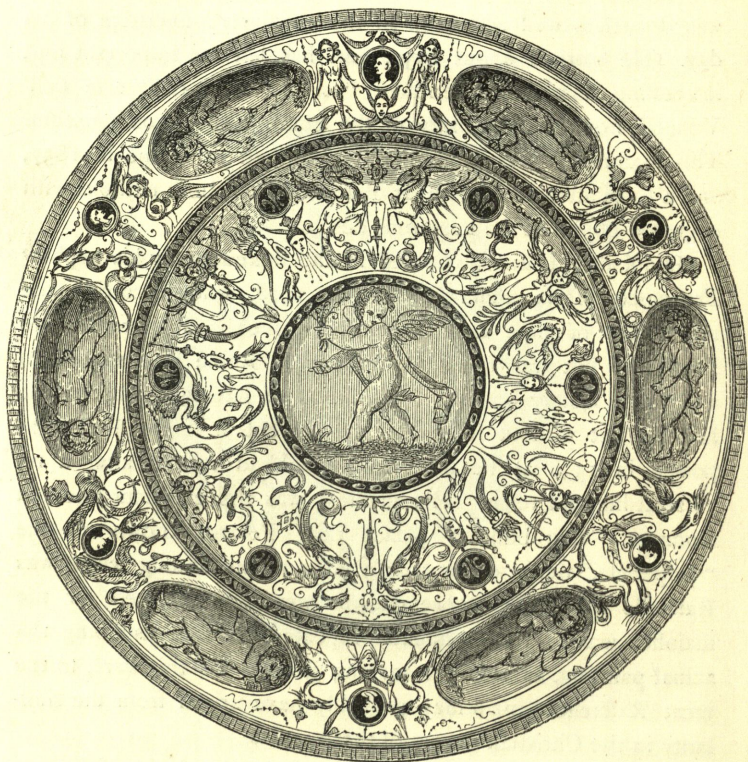
From 1520 to 1540 the art constantly advanced in this duchy, and had retained great perfection till 1560. It is probable that the potteries at Castel Durante were of earlier foundation than those at Urbino and, from their first establishment to the de-

cadence of the art were some of the most important and productive furnaces of the duchy. Here several botteghe existed, one of which was under the direction of the cavaliere Cipriano Piccolpasso who, himself an artist and a professor of medicine, was doubtless well advanced in the chemical knowledge of his day. He worked about 1550, and has left the important and interesting manuscript, entitled "*Li tre libri dell' arte dell' Vasajo*," now in the library of the South Kensington museum. This manuscript was printed and published at Rome in 1857, and a translation in French at Paris in 1841, both editions with engraved copies of the numerous designs.

Guidobaldo I. was succeeded in the dukedom by his nephew Francesco Maria Della Rovere, in 1508, who, incurring the resentment of pope Leo the tenth, was obliged to retire into Lombardy but was reinstated in 1517. Rome was sacked in 1527, and history accuses Guidobaldo of having permitted the horrible act without interfering to prevent it. He died from poison in 1538 at Pesaro, whither he had retired after a reverseful life and reign. His duchess was the excellent Leonora Gonzaga. She built a palace near Pesaro, known as the "*Imperiale*," richly decorated by able artists among whom was Raffaelle dal Colle, whose designs were also adopted for the maiolica ware. The frequently repeated error of ascribing the actual painting, as also the making designs for this ware, to the great Raffaelle Sanzio may probably have arisen from the similarity in the Christian names of these artists.

The development of the manufacture in the duchy of Urbino may be considered to have attained its culminating point about 1540, after which, for some twenty years, it continued in great excellence not only as regards the "*istoriati*," but more particularly in the shaped pieces and dishes (of which we engrave an example p. 40) decorated with the so-called "*Urbino arabesques*" on a clear white ground; the subjects painted in medallions, surrounded by grotesques of admirable invention and execution,

after the style known as "Raffaellesque." But excellent and highly decorative as are the finer products of this period from the furnaces of the Fontana of Urbino, or of the Lanfranchi of



Pesaro, they want to the eye of the true connoisseur the sentiment and expressive drawing, the exquisite finish and delicacy, the rich colour, and the admirable design of the earlier works produced at the Casa Pirola in Faenza, at Forlì, Castel Durante, Siena, and Caffaggiolo, in the latter years of the fifteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth centuries, and by M^o Giorgio at

Gubbio, many of which rival in beauty the exquisite miniature illuminations of that palmy period of Italian art. The service in the Correr museum in Venice, supposed to have been painted by an unknown artist of Faenza and dated 1482, is of high quality ;



and we possess at South Kensington works by his hand, particularly a plaque or tile (No. 69) on which is a representation of the Resurrection of our Lord, worthy of being ranked with the highest productions of pictorial art. The borders of grotesques on the plates of this earlier period differ greatly from those of the Urbino factories of the middle time, being generally grounded on dark blue or yellow, and executed with great delicacy of touch

and power of colouring; the centres of the smaller pieces are usually occupied by single figures, small medallion subjects, portrait heads, amorini, shields-of-arms, &c.; frequently they were intended for "amatorii" or love tokens. Some of the most careful and highly finished productions of M^o Giorgio are of this early time, before he was in the habit of signing with the well-known initials M^o G^o; the earliest so signed being the admirable St. Francis tazza at South Kensington, dated 1517.

We may therefore affirm that the choicest works in Italian pottery were produced during a period which extended from 1480 to 1520 or 1530; thence till 1560 was its meridian, although some fine works were produced at Urbino by the Fontana till 1570; before that time the ruby lustre had been lost, and soon after a rapid decline of design and execution reduces all to painful inferiority. The woodcut (p. 41) is from a splendid dish, dated 1533, no. 1748, at South Kensington.

Guidobaldo II., who had succeeded to Francesco Maria in 1538, wanted the force of character and nice appreciation of the higher literature and art which had distinguished his father; but he was a great patron of the ceramic productions of his duchy, and sought to improve the designs used by painters on pottery by the introduction of subjects of higher character and composition. With this view, lavish of expense, he bought original drawings by Raffaele and the engravings of Marc Antonio from that master's designs. He also made presents of services to contemporary princes and friends. One, given to the emperor Charles V., a double service, is mentioned by Vasari, the vases of which had been painted from the designs of Battista Franco, a Venetian, whom he had invited to Urbino. Another service of which pieces are extant was given by the duke to Andrea da Volterra, his confessor. For the Spezieria or medical dispensary, attached to his own palace, he ordered a complete set of vases and drug pots; designs were prepared for these by B. Franco and Raffaele dal Colle and executed at the bottega of

Orazio Fontana, by whom some of the pieces were painted. They were subsequently presented by duke Francesco Maria II. to the Santa Casa at Loreto, where the greater part of them are still preserved. Some of them were engraved by Bartoli. The story tells us that so highly were they esteemed by Christina of Sweden that she offered to buy them for their weight of gold, after a grand duke of Florence had more prudently proposed an equal number of silver vessels of like weight.

Orazio Fontana, the great artist potter and painter of Urbino, worked for the duke from 1540 to 1560 and carried the art to the highest perfection. Passeri states that Orazio had no equal in the execution of his paintings, the distribution of his colours, and in the calculation of the effect of the fire upon them in the production of his wares. He also quotes various contemporary authors who speak of the excellence of the maiolica of this period. After the death of Orazio Fontana and Battista Franco works of an inferior class only were produced from the designs of the Flemish engravers. From 1580 the decline of the art was rapid. It met but small encouragement from duke Francesco Maria II., who succeeded in 1574, except during his residence at Castel Durante where it still, though feebly, survived. He abdicated in favour of the Holy See, and died in 1631. The rich collections of art then remaining at Urbino became the property of Ferdinand de' Medici, who had married the duke's granddaughter, and were removed to Florence.

Artistic manufactories had, in addition to those of the Umbrian duchy, greatly increased in various parts of Italy under the encouragement of powerful local families; but none appear to have attained to higher excellence than those of Tuscany. At Caffaggiolo under the powerful patronage of the Medici, and at Siena, some of the most excellent pieces of this beautiful pottery were produced, rivalling but not surpassing the fine examples of Faenza.

The Tuscan pieces are remarkable for their rich enamel, for

the force and brilliancy of the colours, and for the execution and design of the grotesque borders and other decoration; a deep rich blue, a peculiar opaque but bright red, and a brilliant yellow, are characteristic pigments. The existence of the former fabrique has been made known to us only by the inscription of the name on some few pieces preserved in cabinets. From their style and the mark accompanying the inscription we are enabled to detect many examples, some of which bear concurrent testimony in the subjects connected with the history of the Medici family with



which they are painted. The well-known plate (in the woodcut) on which a painter is represented engaged in executing the portraits of a noble personage and his lady, who are seated near,

and which were supposed to be intended for Raffaello and the Fornarina, is a fine specimen of the work of perhaps the most able artist engaged at this pottery. This beautiful example is now in the South Kensington museum, acquired from the Bernal collection.

At Siena also admirable works were produced but we are disposed to think that their inspiration was derived from Caffaggiolo, whence also her potters probably received instruction in the application of the stanniferous enamel. Some pieces of the latter end of the fifteenth century are with probability ascribed to Siena, and dated pieces as early as 1501. Tiles also from the same fabrique are remarkable for the excellence of their grotesque borders on an orange yellow ground, having centres painted with great delicacy: some unusual examples having a black ground to their decorative borders.

Rome and the south of Italy do not appear to have produced meritorious works in this field, during the period of its greatest excellence in the northern and Tuscan states; and it is not till the dispersion of the artists, consequent upon the absorption of the Umbrian duchy into the Pontifical states, that we find a Durantine establishing a pottery at Rome, and producing in 1600 an inferior repetition of the grotesque style so admirable in the hands of the Fontana, half a century earlier at Urbino. The decadence was rapid; an increased number of inferior potteries produced wares of a lower price and quality; the fall of the ducal houses which had so greatly encouraged its higher excellence as a branch of fine art, together with the general deterioration in artistic taste, alike tended to its end.

CHAPTER V.

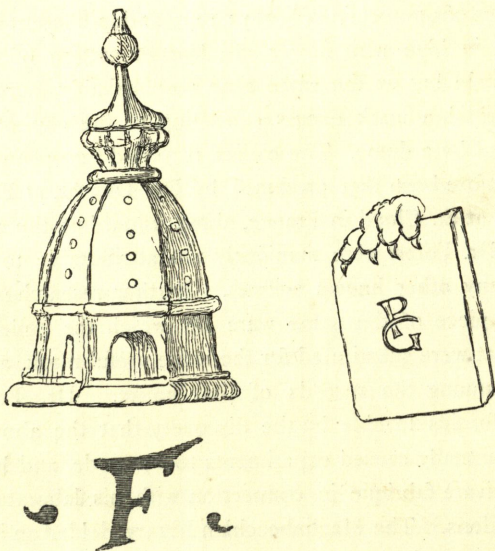
A REVIVAL in the production of native decorative earthenware took place in various parts of Italy, as also in the rest of Europe. The efforts made to imitate true porcelain were reflected by improvements in the quality and decoration of enamelled earthenware, and in the last century we find potteries in various parts of Piedmont and Lombardy, Venice, Genoa and Savona, Urbino and Pesaro, Siena, Castelli, Florence and Rome, producing wares of greater or less artistic excellence. But although careful drawing is occasionally found, as on some of the pieces painted by Ferdinando Maria Campana at Siena, from the prints of Marc Antonio, and some charming designs with borders of amorini among foliage, and subject pieces of great merit from the Castelli fabrique; and although the "technique" of the manufacture is also of great excellence; the ornamentation wants that masculine power of colouring and vigour of the renaissance, so strikingly apparent upon the better productions of the older furnaces, and the admirable delicacy and richness of effect to be seen upon the earlier works.

The endeavours made throughout Europe to discover a method of making porcelain, similar in its qualities or approaching to that imported from China, had begun in the sixteenth century. In this direction also royal encouragement was of the greatest value, and we find that first in the field of discovery was, as naturally might be expected, that country in which the enamelled earthenware had previously reached its highest perfection. Under the patronage of the Grand Duke Francis I. about 1580, experiments

were made which at length resulted in the production of an artificial porcelain of close body and even glaze. The existence of such a production and the history of its origin have been revealed to us only within the last few years, and we are indebted to Dr. Foresi of Florence for having made this discovery, so interesting in the history of the ceramic arts. He had noticed and collected some pieces of a porcelain of heavy nature and indifferent whiteness, decorated in blue with flower and leafage pattern of somewhat oriental style but at the same time unmistakably European, on some of which a mark occurs consisting of the capital letter F, surmounted by a dome. The earliest recorded European porcelain had heretofore been that produced by Dr. Dwight, at Fulham, in 1671, and at St. Cloud in France, about 1695, but the specimens found by Dr. Foresi were manifestly not attributable to either of these or any other known sources. Further researches brought to light a piece of the same ware on which the pellets of the Medici coat were substituted for the more useful mark, and led to a search among the records of that house. Dr. Foresi was rewarded for his trouble by the discovery that the above-named duke had actually caused experiments to be made, and had established a private fabrique in connection with his laboratory in the Boboli gardens. The Magliabecchian library yielded an important manuscript compilation by some person employed by the duke, giving the nature of the composition and details of the production of this ware. The marks on the pieces explained the rest. The Medici arms and the initials F . M . M . E . D . I . I . , reading "Franciscus Medici Magnus Etruriæ Dux Secundus," on one important piece now in the collection of the baron Gustave de Rothschild of Paris, clearly attached it to his reign, while the letter F, the initial of the city, and the dome of her cathedral of which she was so proud, equally pointed to the place of its production.

Another exceptionally fine and interesting piece has recently been acquired in Italy by signor Alessandro Castellani. It is a shallow basin in the centre of which the figure of St. Mark, with

the lion, is painted in the usual blue pigment, and in a manner which stamps it as the work of a master's pencil. What makes this specimen particularly interesting is the existence of a monogram composed of the letters G. and P. which is painted on the volume held beneath the lion's paw, while on the reverse



of the piece the usual mark occurs, as given in the accompanying facsimile. It has been suggested that this monogram may be that of Raffaello's great pupil, Giulio Pippi *detto* Romano, and that, as it has been stated that he occasionally painted upon enamelled earthenware, this piece may be considered as his work. That the design was from the hand of that master is probable, and that its execution was by able ceramic painters is equally so: but Giulio Romano died in 1546, whereas the Medici porcelain does not appear to have been perfected before 1580.

This Florentine porcelain is especially rare; scarcely thirty examples being known to exist. Three of these are at South

Kensington, and one is in the possession of the present writer. It is of value to our subject, not merely as an important episode in the narrative of the rise and progress of ceramic industry in Italy but from its exceptional nature, as one at least of the specimens was decorated by an artist whose handiwork is to be recognised upon pieces of the Urbino enamelled earthenware. The fine "Brocca" 15 inches high, belonging to the baron Gustave Rothschild, is surmounted by an elegantly formed handle springing from grotesque winged masks, modelled in relief. The body is decorated with two belts of grotesques, divided by a narrower one, on which are masks and scroll ornaments; beneath these is a band divided into arched panels or compartments, in each of which is a flower in somewhat Persian taste. These grotesques are executed with great freedom and force and at the same time with a careful finish and delicacy, and in the manner of an unknown painter who worked at the bottega of Camillo Fontana.

It remains to us only to notice the productions of the present day, many of the more meritorious of which are only imitations (in some instances, we regret to say, produced for fraudulent purposes) of the more excellent works of an original period of art; and to give some account of the mode of manufacture, the forms and uses of the pieces, and the manner of their decoration.

The first successful attempt at re-producing the Italian enamelled pottery of the renaissance from original models was, we believe, made at Doccia (the manufactory belonging to the Marquis Ginori) near Florence. The greater number of these pieces were ordered by an unprincipled dealer of that city who supplied the models, and by whom and his agents they were more or less scratched, chipped and otherwise "doctored" to look old, and so imposed upon unwary purchasers at high prices. The writer recollects some of these specimens which were, years since, offered to him at Leghorn by an English tradesman of position (himself possibly deceived), to which a family history had been attached, their

reputed owner (it was said) being under the necessity of parting with them. Since that period the productions of Doccia have improved, the lustre pigment has been re-produced, and these revivals have been justly admired at various international exhibitions of art and industry as legitimate works of the manufactory.

But a still better imitation of the metallic lustre of Gubbio has been produced by an artist of that city; and at Siena some excellent copies of tiles and other pieces have been made; so also at Faenza. Bologna, too, has made copies of the rilievos of Della Robbia which, like those produced at Doccia, may be purchased new of the makers, or found, scratched and dirty, in various curiosity shops throughout Europe, ready to pass for old, some of the worst being occasionally signed as by Luca to enhance their interest. It is to be regretted that a few of these forgeries, as well as admirably executed terra-cottas, have found their way into public museums under a false passport.

At Naples reproductions of the wares of Castelli are well executed.

In France the excellent reproductions of Persian and Rhodian wares by Deck, and some good imitations of the Italian enamelled and lusted pottery by various artists; and in England the pieces produced by Minton, Wedgwood, and other manufacturers, have led to modifications and adaptations, resulting in an important development of this branch of artistic pottery.

CHAPTER VI.

WE are fortunate in possessing a manual of the Italian potters' art of the sixteenth century, in the manuscript by the "Cavaliere Cipriano Piccolpassi Durantino," as he signs his name on the title page of his work. Nearly all the information on this branch of the subject, conveyed to us by Passeri and subsequently by Sig. Giuseppe Raffaelli and other writers, has been gathered from that manuscript written in 1548. We think we cannot do better than go at once to this fountain head, and epitomize the information it conveys, upon the manner and materials, upon the forms and decoration, of maiolica.

After a "prologo" in which the author defends himself from the invidious remarks of others, he tells us how the earth or clay brought down by the river *Metauro* was gathered from its bed during the summer when the stream was low, and by some was made into large balls, which were stowed in holes (*terraz*) purposely dug in the ground; by others it was previously dried in the sun; here it remained to mellow and purge itself from impurities, which otherwise would be injurious. This same method of gathering the material for the foundation of the wares was adopted at many other places. At Venice the earth of Ravenna and Rimini is worked, although they frequently use that dug at Battaglia, near Padua, but for the better sort that of Pesaro.

Our author enters into further details of the method of gathering the potters' clay where there are no rivers, by digging a succession of square pits connected by a channel in the depres-

sions between hills, into which the earth, washed by showers of rain, is refined in its passage from pit to pit. For inferior wares the earth is then collected on a table and well beaten with an iron instrument, weighing twelve pounds, three or four times, being kneaded with the fingers as a woman would in making bread, and all impurities carefully removed. Afterwards it is formed into masses, from which a piece is taken to work upon the wheel or press into moulds. If the earth is too "morbida" it is placed upon the wall or house top, on sieves, through which it is washed by the rain, and gathered in old broken vases, &c., placed beneath.

For making wares "all' urbinata" (meaning probably with a white ground) the dug clay ought to be white, for if of a blue colour it will not take the tin glaze; this, however, is not objectionable if it is to be covered with a slip of "terra di Vicenza" (a white clay), a method which he terms "alla castellana." But it is the reverse with the clay gathered from the beds of rivers, the blue in this case being of the better quality.

It is difficult for us now accurately to apply the names which he gives to the variously shaped pieces, and the more so, as we are informed that in our author's time various names were attached by different artists and at different potteries to the same form. Thus the "Vaso a pera" was also known as "Vaso da due maniche" and "Vaso Dorico;" and the body of such a vase was by some made in one piece, by others in two or three, making joints at the lower part and at the insertion of the neck, and uniting them by means of lute (*barbatina*). Vases and jugs with pyriform bodies, moulded handles, and shaped spouts, or lips, were known as "a bronzo antico" (fig. 1), their forms, doubtless, being derived from the antique bronze vessels discovered in excavations.

Some of these pieces have a stopper fitting into the neck by a screw, the worm of which is worked upon it by means of a piece of wood (*stecca*) formed with projecting teeth, the interior of the

neck being furnished with a corresponding sunken worm. The details of all these methods are illustrated on the third table of



FIG. 1.

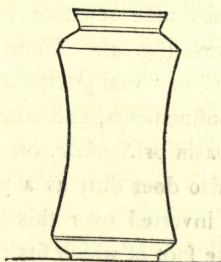


FIG. 2.

his atlas of plates. After telling us that the *albarello* (fig. 2), or drug pot, universally known under that name, is made of different sizes and always of one piece, our author describes the manner of



FIG. 3.

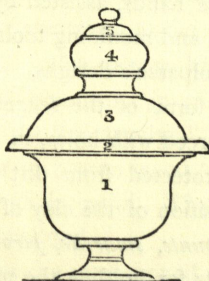


FIG. 4.

forming the *Vaso senza bocca* (fig. 3), a sort of puzzle jug with hermetically fixed cover on the top and an opening beneath the foot, from which an inverted funnel rises inside the body of the vase. To fill it, the piece must be turned upside down and the liquid poured into the funnel below, and may be again poured out

at the spout when required, in the ordinary way, the vase having been placed upright.

It is hardly necessary to give a list of different forms, but we may follow our author in his description of that set of five, or sometimes nine separate pieces, which, fitting together, form a single vase (fig. 4). These sets, known as "*scudella da donna di parto*" or "*vasi puerperali*," were made for the use of ladies in their confinements, and consist of the following pieces :—(1.) The broth basin or *Scodella*, on raised foot. Over this fits the lid (2), which also does duty as a plate (*Tagliere*) for the roll or slice of bread; inverted over this is the drinking cup. (3), *Ongaresca*, upon the foot of which fits the salt cellar, *Saliera* (4), surmounted by its cover (5). The particulars of the arrangement of the nine pieces are not given. Single portions of these are to be found in collections, but the present writer is not aware of any one complete set having been preserved.

Using either the *mugiuolo* or the *scudella*, the mass of clay placed upon the disk is revolved by the wheel and fashioned into form with the hands, assisted by variously shaped pieces of flat wood (*stecche*) and moulding tools of iron (*serri*) all of which are figured in Piccolpasso's designs.

The forms of the seggers, *case* (that is, cases made of fire-clay and pierced with holes, in which the finer wares are baked, being thus protected from dirt or accident in the furnace), and the composition of the clay of which they were made, as also of the *tagli*, *punte*, *smarelle*, *pironi*, &c. variously formed tripods and supports for holding the pieces to be fired, are given us in detail. The clay consists of a mixture of the red earth used for coarser wares and the white, which is reserved for vases and finer pieces.

Shaped pieces with ornaments in relief, masks, spouts, handles, &c. are formed in moulds made of plaster of Paris (*gesso*) upon the original models. The mould being ready, the potter's clay is formed into a cheese-shaped mass of a diameter suitable to the

size of the mould ; from this slices are cut by means of a wire worked over two pieces of wood of the thickness of the required slice, and placed at either side of the cheese of clay. A slice of even thickness being thus obtained it is pressed by the hand into the hollows of the mould ; that for the other side of the piece is then steadily pressed over the clay which occupies the corresponding mould, and the excess exuding from the edge between is neatly cut away. The foot would be similarly formed in another mould, and subsequently attached to the bowl by means of lute (*barbatina*). This lute is made of the finer quality of clay, much worked and allowed to dry, then mixed with a certain quantity of the shearings of fine woollen cloth, kneaded with water and diluted to the consistence of thick cream.

To make shaped vases or ewers (*bronzi antiche*) a mould is formed to each side of the piece, uniting longitudinally at the handle and spout ; the clay pressed into each of these is neatly cut from the edge by means of the *archetto*, a wire strained across a forked stick, and joined to the corresponding side with *barbatina* by which also the handle, formed in another mould, is attached to the piece, the inside being smoothed at the joint by means of a knobbed stick (*bastone*). The pieces known as "abborchiati," such as salt-cellars with ornaments in rilievo, are made in the same manner, as are also the "smartellati" or tazze, &c. formed after the manner of pieces in beaten metal (*repoussé*) with bosses and radiating compartments in relief. The basket-like pieces (*canestrella*) were similarly moulded.

In his second book Piccolpasso gives the receipts and methods of preparing the glaze and colours, commencing with the "marzaccotto," the silicate of potass or glass, which is the foundation of all glaze. We are then told the manner of constructing a reverberatory furnace in which the tin and lead can be oxydized, and which is built of brick with an earth called "sciabione," probably a sort of fire-clay. It consists of an elongated square structure divided longitudinally into two compartments, in one of

which is placed the fire, while the other is occupied, on a higher level, by a shallow tray or trough made of *tufa*, a volcanic stone, or of brickwork, to contain the metals, upon and over which the flame of the burning wood is made to play in its passage to the draft hole at the end.

The construction of other furnaces is his next subject. They were built of brick and of an elongated quadrilateral plan, divided into two stories by an arched floor, pierced to allow of a free circulation to the heat; the upper chamber, which is higher than the lower, is furnished with four small openings on the upper part of either side (*vedette*) and nine similar ones in the vaulted roof; the lower chamber has a well or depression sunk about one foot beneath the surface to receive the ashes from the fire, and both it and the upper one have an arched opening or feeding door (*bocca*) at one end. The dimensions usual at Castel Durante were six feet long by five wide, and six high, but in Venice they were larger, for, says Piccolpasso, "I have seen one at the house of M^o Francesco di Pier ten feet wide by twelve long, outside, having three openings to feed the fire."

In the upper chamber the wares are placed for baking, the finer sorts being enclosed in the seggers (*case*) piled one above another, and the coarser arranged between, supported by pieces of tile, &c. and so packed as to fill the chamber as much as possible without impeding the free current of the fire. This is the first baking, and at the same time the pigments, prepared as previously described, are submitted to the action of the fire in the upper part of the furnace. The opening to the upper chamber is then roughly bricked and luted up, leaving only a small orifice (*bocchetta*) in the upper part. The small lateral openings (*vedette*) are also closed, and those in the roof loosely covered with pieces of tile. The vases containing the mixture of sand and *feccia* for making the *marzacotto* are then placed upon each other under the furnace at the further end (probably in the lower or fire chamber). All being prepared, and invoking the name of God, "uso

Christiano," with the sign of the cross, take a handful of straw and light the fire made of well-dried wood placed in the lower chamber, and which must be gradually increased for four hours, taking care that it is never pushed too much, lest the pieces run or become too hard to receive the glaze. The furnace should be of a clear heat all throughout and so continued for about twelve hours, drawing away the ashes from below with the "cacciabragie" or rake. When sufficiently baked let the fire burn out, and remove the cinders that all may become cool.

We must refer to the Introduction to the large catalogue of the maiolica collection at South Kensington for further extracts, quoting here one sentence only where the author says, "And now I will give you the 'sbiancheggiati' that is made in Lombardy, bearing in mind that the earth of Vicenza is used, making the design on the white earth; I would say with a style of iron of this kind (gives design), and this drawing is called 'sgraffio.'" This is an interesting passage connecting as it does these incised wares with the fabriques of Lombardy, to which, from the character of the designs upon the earlier pieces, we have always assigned them.

In his third book Piccolpasso goes into further details of the glaze and colours, manner of painting, firing, &c.

The "bianchetto" which is only once baked, and the other colours, being removed from the furnace, are triturated with water on a "piletta" or hand colour mill, or by means of a pestle and mortar, to reduce them to a fine powder, and passed through a horse-hair sieve. Some grind them on a slab of porphyry which is even better. The green pigment may be baked two or three times. The "zallo" and the "zallulino," after once or twice baking, are covered with earth and again baked in the hottest part of the furnace.

The white enamel glaze, having been properly milled and fined through a sieve, is made into a bath with water to the consistency of milk. The pottery baked in biscuit is taken out of the furnace,

and after being carefully dusted with a fox's tail is dipped into this bath of glaze and immediately withdrawn, or some of the pieces may be held in the left hand while the liquor is poured over them from a bowl. A trial piece should show the thickness of glove leather in the adhering coat. The "*invetriatura*" having been thus applied and the pieces allowed to dry are now ready to receive the painting. This is executed with coarser and finer brushes or *penelli*, made of goats' and asses' hair, and the finest of the whiskers of rats or mice; the ordinary wares being held in the left hand or on the left knee and the finer in wooden cases, lined with tow, to prevent rubbing. A different brush must be used for each colour. The painters generally sit round a circular table suspended from the ceiling so that it may turn round, and upon this the different pigments are placed.

The painted pieces after being dried in a clean place, taking care that the "*bianco*" is not chipped or rubbed off, are painted with *zallulino* on the outer edge and are then ready to receive the "*coperta*" or outer glaze. The liquid of the bath must be thin, as a translucent coating only is required over the colours; into this the pieces are dipped, and being again dried are ready for the final firing.

In a supplement Piccolpasso gives us an account of the manner of making *maiolica*, and it will be observed that throughout his narrative he has never applied that term to the painted and glazed wares produced at his own bottega, or at any of the others to which he refers.

He tells us that he feels he ought not to omit the account of it which he has received from others, although he has never made or even witnessed the making of it himself. "I know well" he says "that it is painted over finished works; this I have seen in Ugubio, at the house of one Maestro Cencio." The portion of the design which is to receive the lustre colour is left white at the first painting; thus, a figure in a grotesque whose extremities are to be lustred will only have those parts painted which are to be

coloured, leaving the extremities merely sketched in outline upon the white ground; these, after the colours have been set by firing, are subsequently touched with the lustre pigment. The process of firing differs from the former one, because the pieces are not enclosed in seggars but are exposed to the direct action of the flames.

The furnace also is differently constructed, the fire chamber square in form, having no arched roof pierced with holes but only two intersecting arches of brick to support the chamber above, the four corners being left as openings for the free current of the flames. Upon these arches is placed a large circular chamber or vessel, formed of fire-clay, which fits into the square brick structure, touching at the four sides and supported on the intersecting arches beneath, but leaving the angles free. This inner chamber is pierced in all directions with circular holes, to allow the flames free passage among the wares. The method of building these furnaces is kept guarded, and it is pretended that in it and the manner of firing consist the great secrets of the art. The *scudelli* are packed with the edge of one against the foot of another, the first being supported on an unglazed cup. The furnaces are small, only from three to four feet square, because this art is uncertain in its success, frequently only six pieces being good out of one hundred; "true the art is beautiful and ingenious, and when the pieces are good they pay in gold." The fire is increased gradually, and is made of *palli* or dry willow branches; with these three hours firing is given, then, when the furnace shows a certain clearness, having in readiness a quantity of dry broom cease using the willow wood, and give an hour's firing with this; after, with a pair of tongs remove a sample from above. Others leave an opening in one of the sides by which a sample or trial, painted on a piece of broken ware, can be removed for examination, and if it appears sufficiently baked decrease the fire. This done, allow all to cool, then take out the wares and allow them to soak in a lessive of soap-suds, wash and rub them dry

with a piece of flannel, then with another dry piece and some ashes (of wood) give them a gentle rubbing, which will develop all their beauty.

“This is all, as it appears to me, that can be said about the maiolica, as also about the other colours and mixtures that are required in this art.”

CHAPTER VII.

WE have given in the last chapter a very brief abstract or epitome of the interesting manuscript of Piccolpasso, which offers us a perfect idea of the manner and comparatively simple appliances under which the beautiful examples of the potter's art were produced in Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The *rationale* of these processes is clear enough and requires no comment; but we may perhaps remark that whereas the fixing of the glaze and colours in the ordinary process is merely produced by a degree of heat sufficient to liquefy and blend them, in the case of the metallic reflection a different effect is requisite, and different means adopted. The pigments consist partly of metallic salts, which being painted on the wares, after exposure to a simple heat for some time, have then directed upon their glowing surface the heated smoke given off by the fagots of broom; this smoke being in fact carbon in a finely divided state has great power, at a high temperature, of reducing metals from their salts; painted on the wares these are thereby decomposed, leaving a thin coat of mixed metal, varying in colour and iridescence from admixture with the glaze and other causes, and producing the beautiful effects so well known.

The various names by which the Italian pottery of the renaissance has been known have in some instances arisen from, as they have also led to, error. "Faenza ware," doubtless, had its origin from the town of that name, although its French equivalent "faïence" may either be a translation of the Italian, or may be derived from a town in Provence, called "Faïance" or "Fay-

ence," a few miles from Cannes and Fréjus, where potteries are stated to have existed from an early period. "Urbino ware" and "Umbrian ware" explain themselves as connected with those important sites of the manufacture, while the name of "Raffaelle ware" was doubtless derived from the subjects after his designs, with which so many pieces were painted, and from the grotesques after his manner. A very beautiful drawing of his school, and which has been ascribed to Raffaelle's own pencil, is in the royal collection at Windsor. It is for the border of a plate, and consists of a continuous circular group of amorini, dancing in the most graceful attitudes.

Scripture subjects are perhaps more general upon the pieces of early date, particularly those of Faenza, on which designs from Albert Dürer, Martin Schön, and other German painters are found, executed with the greatest care; such subjects were also used at Caffaggiolo. The spirit of the renaissance awakening a passion for the antique declared itself in the numerous representations from Greek and Roman history and mythology, scenes from Homer, the metamorphoses of Ovid, and the like, which formed the main stock subjects for the wares of the Umbrian fabriques, excepting always the sacred histories delineated so admirably by Orazio Fontana and others, from the designs of Raffaelle and his scholars. It was among the artists of this duchy that the habit of writing the subject on the back of the piece chiefly prevailed, with specimens of curious spelling and strange latinity. Transmutation of subject is not rare, as the burning of the "Borgo" for the siege of Troy, and others. The forms appear to have varied considerably at different localities of the craft, partaking of a classic origin, mixed with some orientalism in the earlier and gothic forms in the more northern pieces; but upon all the exuberance of fancy and rich ornamentation characteristic of the Italian "cinque-cento" is made evident, as it is upon the furniture, the bronzes, and the jewellery of that artistic period.

There can be little doubt that the maiolica and finer painted wares were looked upon at the time they were produced as objects of ornament or as services "de luxe." The more ordinary wares or *dozzinale* were doubtless used for general domestic purposes in the houses of the higher classes, but the finer pieces decorated by better artists were highly prized. Thus we find that



services were only made for royal or princely personages, frequently as presents. Some of the choicest specimens in our cabinets were single gift pieces; small plates and *scodelle* which it was then the fashion for gallants to present, filled with preserves or *confetti*, to ladies. Many of these are of the form known as *tondino*, small, with a wide flat brim and sunk centre; in this the central medallion is generally occupied by a figure of Cupid, hearts tied by ribbon, or pierced by arrows; or by joined hands

and similar amatory devices, or with a shield of arms and initial letters. The borders are painted with grotesques and trophies, among which sonnets and music sometimes occur, and medallions with love emblems, portraits, and armorial bearings. These *amatorii* pieces also occur as large plates and deep saucers, the surface of each entirely covered with a portrait of the beloved (as in the engraving p. 63) accompanied by a ribbon or banderole, on which her name or a motto is inscribed, often with the complimentary accompaniment of "bella," "diva," "paragon di tutti," &c. Jugs, vases, and other shaped pieces were also decorated in a similar style.

We find in maiolica all objects for table use : inkstands, ornamental vases, and quaint surprises ; salt-cellars of curious forms ; jugs of different size and model ; many kinds of drug pots and flasks ; pilgrims' bottles, vasques, and cisterns ; candelabra and candlesticks, rilievo and figures in the round ; in short, every object capable of being produced in varied fancy by the potter's art : even beads for necklaces, some of which are in the writer's possession, decorated with knot work and concentric patterns and inscribed severally ANDREA · BELLA = MARGARITA · BELA = MEMENTO · MEI ; these last, the only examples known, are finished with considerable care and are probably of the earlier years of the sixteenth century.

There is little doubt that many of the pieces ostensibly for table use were only intended and applied for decorative purposes (like the vase in the woodcut p. 131), to enrich the shelves of the "credenza," "dressoir," or high-backed sideboard, intermingled with gold and silver plate, Venetian glass, &c. Such pieces were known as "piatti di pompa" or show plates, and among them are some of the most important and beautiful of the larger dishes and bacili, as well as the more elaborate and elegant of the shaped pieces.

CHAPTER VIII.

PERSIAN, DAMASCUS, AND RHODIAN WARES.

IN a previous chapter we have traced the origin or parentage of this section of wares to the glazed pottery and artificial semi-porcelain of Egypt, and we have seen that in Assyria and at Babylon siliceous glazed tiles were used for wall decoration. Whether in Persia and in India a similar manufacture existed at that early period we have at present no exact knowledge, but we are told by the Count Julien de Rochchouart in his interesting "Souvenirs d'un voyage en Perse" that he possesses a brick glazed of dark blue colour, with cuneiform characters in white, which was found among the ruins of the ancient city of Kirman. The mosques of the 12th century in that country, particularly that at Natinz, are covered with glazed tiles of the most perfect workmanship and artistic excellence, with coloured and lustred decoration. Later examples—of the earlier years of the 17th century—specimens of which are in the Kensington museum are also beautiful, and the fashion, though in a degenerate form, is revived in that country at the present day. The piece of glazed pottery supposed to have been of ancient Hebrew origin and now preserved in the Louvre is also of this nature, and it is suggested by M. Jacquemart that the Israelites may have acquired the art in Egypt.

The varieties of pottery known under the names of Persian, Damascus, Rhodian, and Lindus wares, composing a large family, may be classified as *siliceous or glass-glazed* wares. The leading characteristics are—

1. A paste composed of a sandy and a white argillaceous earth, and some alkali or flux, greatly varying in their relative proportions, and producing degrees of fineness and hardness from a coarse sandy earthenware to a semi-vitrified translucent body, the latter being in fact a kind of porcelain of artificial paste.
2. A glaze formed as a true glass, of siliceous sand and an alkali (potash or soda), with the addition in some cases of a small quantity of oxide of lead or other flux.

Such is the general, but by no means the constant, definition of the component ingredients of all the varieties rightly classed together as members of this group, for there can be no doubt that great variations occurred in their composition at different periods and places, and some examples of the finer kinds of Persian, Arabian, and perhaps of Damascus wares are met with in, or under, the glaze of which the oxide of tin has been used to produce a white and more even surface.

A large amount of information about Persian ware is conveyed to us in the work of the comte de Rochchouart who, during a residence of some years in Persia, gave great attention to its ceramic productions of former and of present times. After establishing the fact of the former production of at least four distinct kinds of Kaolinic porcelain, he minutely describes ancient varieties of faience of which the polychrome pieces are the more rare, the blue and white less so; he mentions one uncommon variety, believed to have been made at Cachan, as having a paste of red earth covered with a stanniferous enamel of great beauty, and painted in cobalt under a glaze highly baked; they ring like metal. We do not recollect having seen an example of this variety. Marks imitating those on Chinese porcelain occur on pieces painted in cobalt blue on white. He further tells us that the ancient faience of Persia is as admirable as the modern is detestable, notwithstanding it retains a degree of

oriental elegance. The industry at present is carried on at Nahinna; at Natinz, where pottery has been made for some hundred years, and where some of the finest was produced but now inferior; at Cachan, turquoise blue, and many-coloured; while Hamadan, Kaswine and Teheran make inferior wares, the latter being the worst.

We do not derive any information from M. de Rochchouart on the subject of the lusted wares, except in his description of the tiles of the mosque of Natinz of the 12th century; nor do we learn anything of that variety of creamy white pottery having the sides pierced through the paste but filled with the translucent glaze, and which is believed to be the Gombrōn ware of Horace Walpole's day. But he gives interesting information on the subject of the tiles used for decoration, of which the finest are those mentioned above; those of Ispahan and of the period of Shah Abbās (1585-1629) being also admirable for their exquisite design.

The Persian glazed pottery known to us may be divided into :

- A. Wares, generally highly baked, and sometimes semi-translucent. Paste, fine and rather thin, decorated with ruby, brown, and coppery lustre, on dark blue and creamy white ground. Engraved p. 68 is a very curious and characteristic example: unfortunately imperfect. It is in the Kensington collection.
- B. Wares, of fine paste, highly baked, semi-translucent, of creamy colour and rich clear glaze, running into tears beneath the piece of a pale sea-green tint. Its characteristic decoration consisting of holes pierced through the paste, and filled in with the transparent glaze: the raised centres, &c. are bordered with a chocolate brown or blue leafage, slightly used. This is supposed to be the Gombrōn ware.
- C. Wares, frequently of fine paste, and highly baked to semi-

transparency : the ground white ; decoration of plants and animals, sometimes after the Chinese, in bright cobalt blue, the outlines frequently drawn in manganese ; some



pieces with reliefs and imitation Chinese marks also occur ; this variety is perhaps more recent than the others.

We assign the name DAMASCUS as the chief centre of a large class of wares which were also made, in all probability, in Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Asia Minor, &c., and among which pieces of Persian manufacture may be included from our want of exact knowledge of their technical differences ; a certain general character pertaining to the whole class. There can be no doubt that Damascus was an important producer of this pottery, which

was known to the commerce of the 16th century as "Damas" ware, and we have examples, in silver mountings, of the period of queen Elizabeth. It would be well, therefore, to revive the term "Damas" or "Damascus ware" for this family, of which the true Damascus and Rhodian are only local varieties, in preference to the misapplied general name of "Persian," by which they have been known.

The paste varies in quality more than in kind, being of a grey white colour and sandy consistence, analogous to that of the Persian wares. The decoration is more generally rich in colour, the ground white, blue, turquoise, tobacco colour, and lilac, sometimes covered with scale work, with panels of oriental form or leafage, large sprays of flowers, particularly roses, tulips, hyacinths, carnations, &c., the colours used being a rich blue, turquoise, green, purple, yellow, red, black. The forms are elegant; large bowls on raised feet, flasks or bottles bulb-shaped with elongated necks; pear-shaped jugs with cylindrical necks and loop-handle; circular dishes or plates with deep centres, &c. An interesting example of the highest quality of this ware is in the writer's possession, and is described and figured in colour in vol. xlii. of the "Archæologia." It is a hanging lamp made for and obtained from the mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, signed and dated June 1549.

Two leading varieties are known in collections: namely, *Damascus proper*; known by its evenness of surface and rich glaze with subdued but harmonious colouring, certain tones of which are peculiar to this variety; for example, a dull lilac or purple, replacing the embossed red so conspicuous on the Rhodian, and used against blue, which is of two or three shades, the turquoise being frequently placed against the darker tone; a sage green is also characteristic. The dishes of this variety usually have the outer edge shaped in alternating ogee.

This kind is much more uncommon than the other, RHODIAN or LINDUS, to which the greater number of pieces known in

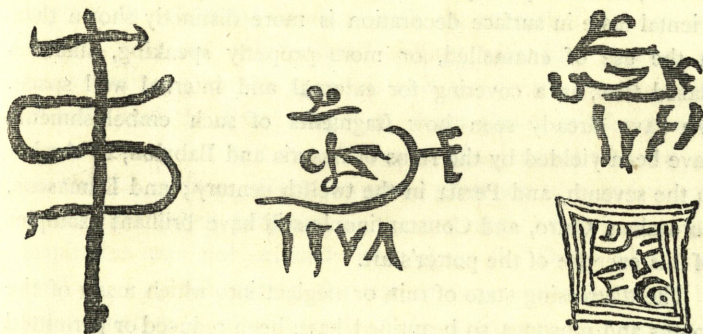
collections as "Persian ware" belong. It is to Mr. Salzmann that we owe the discovery of the remains of ancient furnaces at Lindus, in the island of Rhodes, from the old palaces of which he collected numerous examples. This variety, although extremely beautiful, is generally coarser than the former, and the decoration



more marked and brilliant. A bright red pigment, so thickly laid on as to stand out in relief upon the surface of the piece, is very characteristic and in many cases is a colour of great beauty; the predominant decoration of the plates consists of two or three sprays of roses, pinks, hyacinths, and tulips, and leaves, sometimes tied together (as in the woodcut) at the stem and spreading over the entire surface of the piece in graceful lines; the border frequently of black and blue scroll work. Ships, birds, and

animals, are also depicted; and a shield of arms occurs on some pieces.

Another very distinct and perhaps more recent class, the ANATOLIAN, consists of those wares frequently found in collections, as cups and saucers, sprinklers, perfume vases, covered bowls, and the like, generally pieces of small size. The ground is usually white, sometimes incised with cross lines by means of a piece of wood scratching the soft paste, with a gay decoration of many colours, among which a brilliant yellow is conspicuous in scale work, lattice and diaper patterns, flowers, &c. Its glaze is frequently



not brilliant, but rather rough on the surface; but the pieces are well baked. This variety is ascribed to the fabrique of Kutahia in Anatolia.

There is yet another variety of this section which is somewhat exceptional, approaching as it does in composition to the first division of the Persian wares, and on the other hand to the decoration of the earlier pieces of the Hispano-moresque. It is composed of a sandy paste of the kind general to this section, and is decorated either in black outline relieved or filled in with blue painted directly on the paste, and covered by a thick translucent glaze of a creamy tone, running into tears at the bottom of the piece; or glazed entirely with a translucent dark blue glass, over

which the decoration is painted in a rich lustre colour, varying between the golden and ruby tints of the Italian Majolica, and differing considerably from those upon the Hispano-moresque wares.

We give on the preceding page three or four marks from various pieces of Persian or rather "Damascus" ware.

Before we pass to another class, it may be well again to direct the reader's attention to that important application of glazed oriental pottery, already referred to, and which has been in use more or less throughout the east from a period of remote antiquity. Indeed, there is perhaps no instance in which the superiority of oriental taste in surface decoration is more distinctly shown than in the use of enamelled, or more properly speaking, siliceous glazed tiles, as a covering for external and internal wall space. We have already seen how fragments of such embellishments have been yielded by the ruins of Assyria and Babylon, by Arabia in the seventh, and Persia in the twelfth century; and Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, and Constantinople still have brilliant examples of this exercise of the potter's art.

The distressing state of ruin or neglect into which many of the tombs and mosques, so beautified, have been reduced or permitted to fall greatly detracts from their effect, although not without its charm to the painter's eye and it is refreshing to see them, as at Constantinople, in a somewhat better state of preservation. In that city there is excellent work of this kind in the old palace of the Seraglio, where the writer noticed tiles remarkable for their size and for the perfection of their manufacture. Some of these, nearly two feet square, are covered with the most elegant arabesque diapering of foliage and flowers intertwined, among which birds and insects are depicted. These may probably have been the work of a Persian potter. But it is in the tomb of Soliman the great, built in 1544, that the effect of this mode of decoration can be studied to better advantage. Here the entire walls of the interior are faced with tiles of admirable diaper

patterns, within borders of equal elegance, adapted to the form of the wall which they panel and following the subtle outlines of the window openings, which, filled in with gem-like coloured glass between their intricate tracery, produce an effect of the greatest richness and harmony. The application of glazed pottery for decorating wall surface seems never to have taken root in Greece or Italy (although slabs of glass of various colours were used by the Romans for that purpose), where Mosaic had established itself long anterior to the advance of oriental influence; and even in the most palmy days of the production of Italian majolica and painted pottery, nothing of this kind was attempted by her artists beyond an occasional flooring—with the exception of Luca della Robbia, who not only covered ceilings with tiles between the relievo subjects on the spandrels and the centre, as seen at San Miniato and the Pazzi chapel at Santa Croce in Florence, but executed roundels and arch fillings of tiles, painted with subjects on the flat surface. Germany made great use of tiles for facing stoves and other purposes in the sixteenth century, but their inspiration was not oriental; and, again, the Dutch tiles, much used in England during the last century, are well known but ornamented on a false principle of decorative art. In the Indian court of the international exhibition of 1871 were examples of Zenana windows and wall tiles from Sinde, of recent manufacture, and of precisely similar character in body and glaze to the class of wares now under consideration. They, moreover, show another mode of decoration, known as "*pâte sur pâte*," in which the design is painted on the surface of the clay in a slip or "*engobe*" of lighter colour underneath the glaze; a manner of ornamentation found upon early Chinese porcelain, and upon that ascribed by M. Jacquemart to Persia.

These tiles, together with shaped pieces of the same Indian ware, are very interesting, being without doubt the modern representatives of a remote manufacture and having the closest affinity with the ancient Egyptian glazed pottery. Whence they were

derived or which the parent stock is a question the answer to which we are not at present in a position to do more than guess at. In France and England reproductions have appeared, many of which are excellent from the talent of their painters or from the technical qualities of their manufacture: those produced by the Messrs. Minton, copied or derived from oriental originals, are particularly beautiful.

CHAPTER IX.

HISPANO-MORESQUE POTTERY.

THIS numerous and now well-defined class of wares was a few years since indiscriminately grouped with the lusted Maiolica of Italy, in which country the larger number of specimens now in our collections had been preserved, and whence they have been procured. Many hesitated to believe in their Spanish origin, thinking it more probable that they were the work of Moorish potters established in the sister peninsula. The correspondence, however, of technical character with the "azulejos," the well-known tiles which adorn the palace of the Alhambra at Seville, and with the celebrated "jarra" or Alhambra vase, as also a marked difference between these and any wares of known Italian manufacture, led to the conviction that they must be of Spanish origin, and the work of the Moorish potters and their descendants who had been established in that country.

Under this belief they were classed together as Hispano-arabian enamelled and lusted wares, but this appellation would connect them with the so-called Saracens who conquered that country in A.D. 712. The first Arab invaders were themselves expelled in 756 by Abd-el-Rhama, who caused himself to be proclaimed caliph at Cordova. This city thus became the great centre of his power, and here was erected the mosque of which the decoration attests the exquisite oriental taste of its founders. The ornamental wall tiles on this building are of truly Hispano-arabian manufacture.

The rule of the successors of Abd-el-Rhama ended and the line

became extinct in 1038, soon after which time the Moorish conquest was completed. In 1235 Granada became the chief seat of the Moorish rulers, and there they erected the fortress-palace of the Alhambra about 1273. After an occupation of the country for four centuries the Moors were conquered in 1492. The Christian element would then predominate in the decoration of the pottery; and in 1566 the last blow was struck at Moorish art by the promulgation of a decree prohibiting the speaking or writing of their language, and forbidding the use to men and women of their national dress and veil, and the execution of decorative works in the Moresque style.

When first recognized as a distinct family, these wares were found to be difficult of classification, from the entire absence of dates or names of manufactories. Labarte and others considered the copper-lustred pieces to be the earlier, but Mr. Robinson, with his usual acuteness, saw in the ornamentation of various examples reasons for reversing this arrangement, and suggested one which subsequent observation has only tended to confirm. He placed those pieces having a decoration in a paler lustre with interlacings and other ornaments in manganese and blue, coats of arms, &c., in the earlier period; those having the ornament in the paler lustre only, without colour, of nearly equal date, as also some of the darker coppery examples with shields of arms; and of a later period those so glaring in copper-coloured lustre as to be more painful than pleasing to the eye.

M. Davillier (to whose researches into the history of these wares we are greatly indebted) considers that in all probability MALAGA was the earliest site of the manufacture, and argues that its maritime situation and trade with the east and its proximity to Granada would warrant that opinion, which is strengthened by the earliest documentary evidence yet brought to light. One Ibn-Batoutah a native of Tangier, writing in 1350 after journeying through the east, states that "at Malaga, the beautiful gilt pottery or porcelain is made, which is exported to the most distant coun-

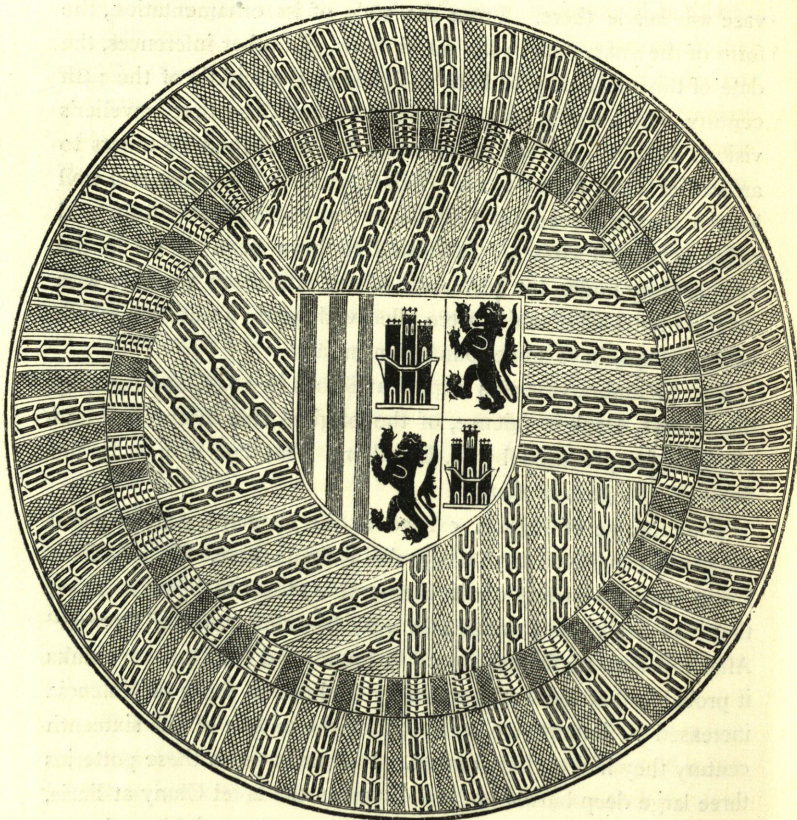
tries." He makes no mention of a fabrique at Granada in describing that city, and we may therefore reasonably conclude that Malaga was the centre of this industry in the Moorish kingdom, and if so there is great probability that the celebrated Alhambra vase was made there. From the style of its ornamentation, the form of the characters in the inscriptions, and other inferences, the date of this piece may be fairly assigned to the middle of the 14th century, which would be about the same period as that traveller's visit to the city. It has nevertheless been ascribed by others to an earlier time, about 1320. This vase is so generally and well known that we need only allude to its characteristic form and richly decorated surface. It is said to have been found in the 16th century under the pavement of the Alhambra together with several others, all of which were filled with gold; a tradition which may, perhaps, have some foundation in fact.

The Alhambra vase was copied at Sèvres in 1842, and since by the Messrs. Deck in faience, of the original size after a cast and photographs procured by M. Davillier. This last is now in the South Kensington museum.

The fabrique of Malaga existed in the sixteenth century; and the plateau engraved p. 78 was probably made there. We learn from Lucio Marineo writing of the memorable things of Spain in 1517, that "at Malaga are made also very beautiful vases of faience." After this date no further record is found, and M. Davillier thinks it probable that the works gradually declined as those of Valencia increased in importance, and that by the middle of the sixteenth century they had entirely ceased. He attributes to these potteries three large deep basins and two vases in the hôtel Cluny at Paris, which are covered with designs in golden *reflet* and blue of great similarity to those of the Alhambra vase, and also the fine vase from the Soulages collection at South Kensington.

After the fabrique of Malaga that of MAJORCA is thought to be the most ancient, and the extension of its manufactures by commerce is indirectly proved by the adoption of the term

"Majolica" by the potters of Italy for such of their wares as were decorated with the metallic lustre. Scaliger, writing in the first half of the sixteenth century, speaks highly of the wares of the



Balearic islands: but not being an "expert" in ceramic productions, after praising the porcelain recently brought from China, admires what he calls their imitations made at Majorca. "We call them (he says) '*majolica*,' changing one letter in the name of the island where we are assured that the most beautiful are

made:" an interesting testimony to the importation of these wares into Italy and the knowledge of their origin, as also to the derivation of the term applied to the home manufacture of Pesaro and Gubbio.

Although presumably of much earlier date no record of this pottery occurs till that of Giovanni di Bernardi da Uzzano, the son of a rich Pisan merchant, who in 1442 wrote a treaty on commerce and navigation, published by Paquini, in which he speaks of the manufactures of Majorca and Minorca, particularly mentioning faience which "had then a very large sale in Italy." We have evidence that the principal seat of the manufacture was at Ynca, in the interior of the island; and in confirmation of this discovery some plates have been observed by M. Davillier in collections on which the arms of that island are represented. One is in the hôtel Cluny, and is probably of the fifteenth century. It is Moresque in style with illegible inscriptions in an odd mixture of the Arabic and Gothic characters; the lustre of a red colour and the arms in the centre. These arms are, paly gules and or, on a fess argent a dog in the act of bounding, sable.

There would seem also to have been a fabrique at Iviça for Vargas, in his description of the Balearic islands, says, "It is much to be regretted that Iviça has ceased to make her famous vases of faience, destined for exportation as well as for local consumption." But of their precise nature he gives us no information and we have no knowledge.

The kingdom of VALENCIA in the time of the Romans was noted for its works in pottery; those produced at Saguntum, the present Murviedro, having a great reputation at that period according to Pliny, who mentions the jasper red pottery of Saguntum where 1,200 workmen were employed.

To these, after the occupation of the Goths, succeeded the Arab workmen who accompanied the Mussulman conquest in 711. Again, when the Moors were in 1239 subjected to Christian domination the potters' art was considered of sufficient importance

to claim a special charter from the king, who granted it to the *Saracens* of Xativa, a small town now called San-Felipe. This charter provides that every master potter making vases, domestic vessels, tiles, "rajolas" (an Arabic name for wall-tiles, synonymous with "azulejos"), should pay a "besant" annually and freely pursue his calling.

Sir Wm. Drake in his notes on Venetian ceramics cites an ordinance of the Venetian senate in 1455, declaring that no earthenware works of any kind should be introduced into the dominions of the Signory except crucibles ("*correzzoli*") and *Majolica of Valencia*; an important fact proving the value that was attached to the Spanish lustre wares in Italy in the middle of the fifteenth century. The woodcut p. 81 represents a fine plateau at South Kensington, golden lusted; of about the year 1500.

Marineo Siculo, writing in 1517, devotes a chapter to the utensils and other objects of faience made in Spain, in which he states that "the most esteemed are those of Valencia, which are so well worked and so well gilded;" and Capmany records a decree of the municipal council of Barcelona in 1528 relative to the exportation of faience to Sicily and elsewhere, in which "la loza de Valencia" is named. Again Barreyros a Portuguese, in his "*Chorographia*," praising the pottery of Barcelona says that it is "even superior" to that of Valencia. The expulsion of the Moors in 1610 by Philip III. gave the fatal blow to this industry, as we learn from contemporary authors that many of the banished artisans were potters ("*olleros*").

From time immemorial St. John the evangelist has been particularly venerated at Valencia, and in the grand processions of Corpus Christi the emblematic eagle is carried, holding in his beak a banderole on which is inscribed the first sentence of his gospel: "*In principio erat Verbum et Verbum erat apud Deum.*" On some pieces of Hispano-moresque ware this sentence is inscribed, and the eagle sometimes covers the front, sometimes the back. There is therefore reason to infer that these were made in

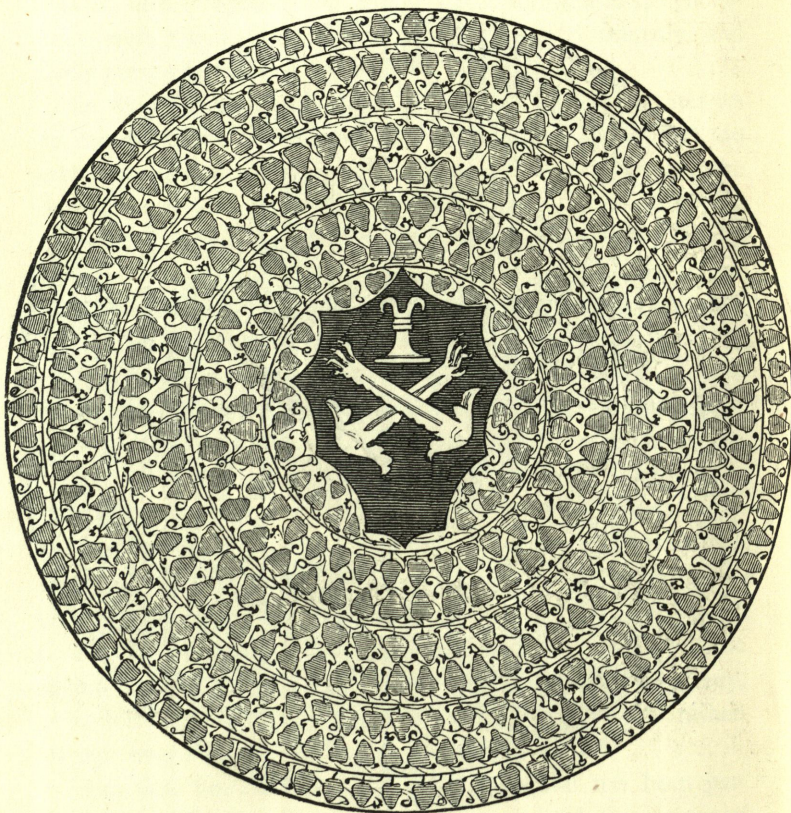
one of the fabriques of Valencia, and if so their style would be to a considerable extent typical of the Valencian pottery. The decoration was probably inspired by the wares of Malaga, and it



is likely that many of the pieces of the fifteenth century, bearing inscriptions in Gothic characters with animals, &c. in blue, may be of this fabrique.

In the British museum is a plate painted with an antelope and Moresque ornament in blue, and with the inscription "*Santa Catalina Guarda Nos:*" others occur, though very rarely, with

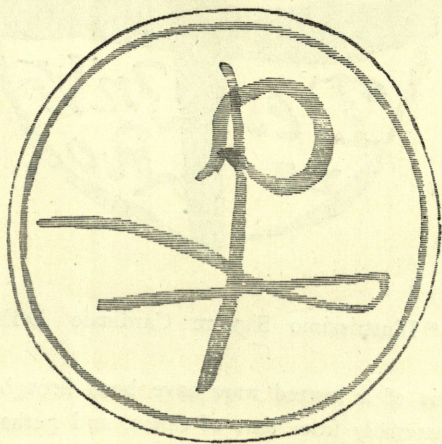
Spanish inscriptions. At the commencement of the 17th century the Valencian wares had lost nearly all their Moresque character, and the employment of the copper lustre only was retained :



the designs having figures in the costumes of that period and coarse leafage or birds with "*rococo*" ornaments.

It would thus appear that the fabrique of Malaga was the most ancient, and that of Valencia the most important in Spain ; but other potteries existed, and their productions were widely distributed. The woodcut represents a Valencian dish with golden

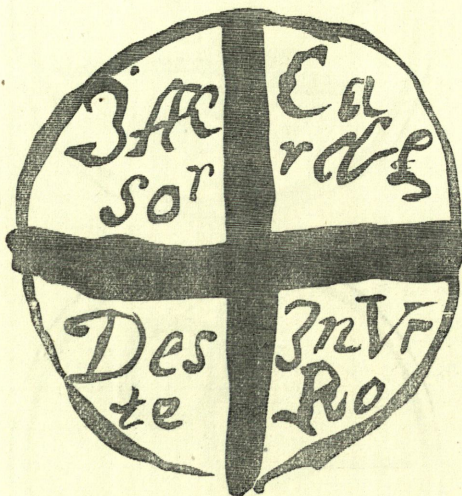
lustre, of the 15th century. That these wares were imported into England is proved by fragments found in London, on one of which, in the British museum, is represented a man in the costume of the period of Henry the fourth, about 1400.



Makers' names have never been observed upon pieces of this pottery, and marks are very rarely met with. The above marks

are on the back of two small plates with deep centres, in which is painted a shield of arms bearing a crowned eagle with open wings in blue, the rest of the surface being diapered with small vine or briony leaves and interlaced tendrils in concentric order, of golden lustre on the creamy white ground.

These pieces are perhaps of the same service, probably of Malaga or Valencia, and may be of the earlier half of the 15th century; they are in the writer's possession. In Mr. Henderson's rich collection is a vase on one side of which is the inscription, of which we give a facsimile :



It reads "Illustrissimo Signore Cardinale D'Este in Urbe Romæ."

Specimens of a lusted ware have been brought from Sicily, differing materially from that of Spain, and perhaps forming a connecting link between that and the earlier Persian pottery. They are formed of an ordinary clay covered with an earthy or stanniferous (?) wash, which is again coated with a rich trans-

lucent blue glaze on which a diapering of vermicular ornament in coppery lustre covers the whole piece, except that the edges and handles are also painted in lustre. This ware is by no means common; it occurs in the form of plates, covered bowls, and "*albarelli*:" and is supposed to be the workmanship of Moorish potters at Calata-Girone.

CHAPTER X.

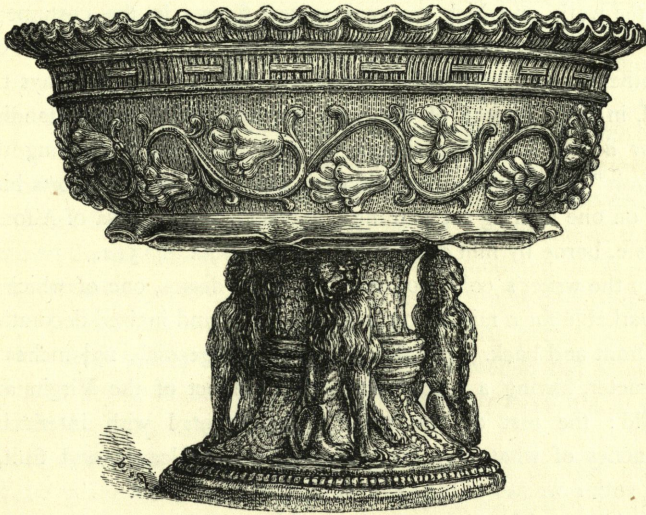
ITALIAN POTTERY ; SGRAFFIATI, AND CAFFAGGIOLO.

COMING now to Italian pottery, we must speak first of *sgraffiati*, *graffiti*, or incised wares. This mode of ornamentation is one of the most primitive and universal in a ruder form, although it appears but little on the early glazed wares of our own country ; of those of France a fine example, attributed to the 14th century, is preserved at Sèvres. In Italy, as was the case in all other varieties of pictorial art, it was brought to a high degree of perfection, not merely as a manner of ornamenting pottery but applied on a large scale to mural decoration. It appears to have been in use from an early period, examples of a coarse kind occurring among the plates incrustated in the towers of churches of the 12th and 13th centuries at Pisa and elsewhere, and it was probably in use before or coeval with the earliest painted wares.

Its method as applied to pottery is described by Piccolpasso in his manuscript, and consists in covering the previously baked "biscuit" of ordinary potter's clay with a "slip" or "*engobe*" of the white marl of Vicenza, by dipping it into a bath of that earth milled with water to the consistence of cream ; when dry, this white covering, fixed by a slight baking, is scratched through with an iron instrument shewing the design in the red colour of the clay against the superimposed white ground. It is then covered with an ordinary translucent lead glaze, and clouded with yellow and green by slight application of the oxides of iron and copper.

There appears to be a considerable range in the dates of various specimens in collections, some of which are probably among the

earliest examples of Italian decorative pottery that have come down to us ; others may be of the middle or last quarter of the 15th century and, like the fine example which we engrave, are



highly characteristic ; great skill is shown upon them in the combination of figures and foliage in rilievo with the incised ornamentation. Nearly all the pieces of this class are probably the work of one bottega, and are distinguished by the character of their designs ; a border of mulberry leaves is very general, or shields of the "pavoise" or kite form. Judging also from the sort of florid Gothic character to be seen in some of the leafage mouldings, from the costumes of the north of Italy in the 15th century, and from the lion supporters and other details which connect them with north Italian art, we have little hesitation in believing that they were produced in Lombardy or the Venetian mainland.

Of the more important examples, the Louvre possesses a fine cup on a raised stem and supported by three lions ; in the interior, a man habited in the costume of the 15th century stands playing

a mandolin between two females, one of whom sings while the other plays the tambourine; the raised and incised mouldings on this piece are very characteristic. In the British museum are some fine dishes, one of which is remarkable for the admirable execution of the work, on which are represented figures in the costume of the 15th century, festoons of fruit and other ornaments. On another are the figures of a gentleman and a lady who plays the viol, in the costume of the 15th or early 16th century standing "*dos à dos*;" on her side is a "pavoise" shield bearing the "*biscia*" or serpent of the Visconti, while the man supports himself on one bearing the flaming bomb-shell, the impresa of Alfonso d'Este, borne by him at the battle of Ravenna in 1512.

In the writer's collection are two early dishes, one of which is remarkable for a raised flower in the centre and incised decoration on front and back. He also possesses a large dish, 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, having a medallion central subject of the Virgin and Child: the rest of the piece being covered with interlacing branches of what may be mulberry bearing leaves and fruit, a serpentine wreath of the same encircling the border.

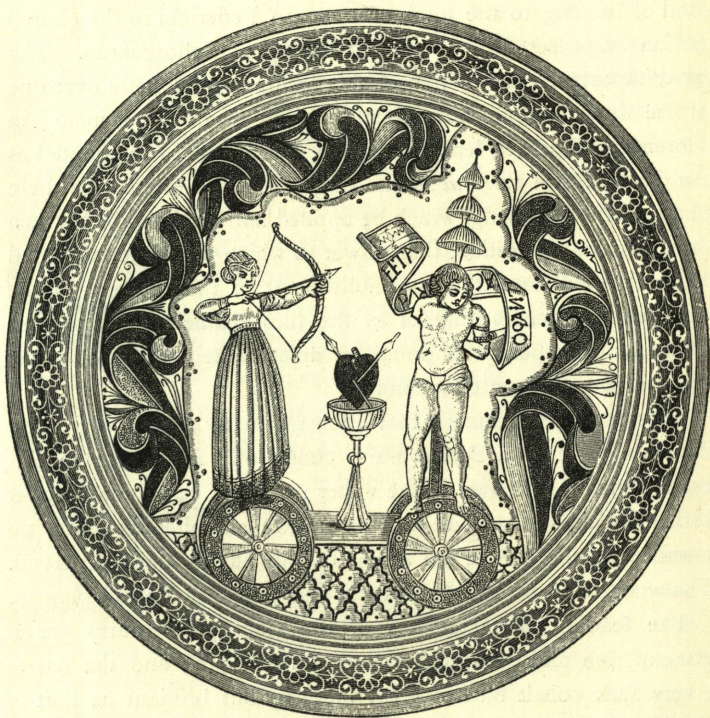
It is probable that were the archives of Florence thoroughly searched some record might be found of the establishment or existence at CAFFAGGIOLO of an artistic pottery encouraged and patronized by the Medici family, but at present we have no such recorded history. Here again the objects themselves have been their best and only historians. It was but a few years since that the ill indited name of this bottega, noticed upon the back of a plate, was read as that of the artist who had painted it; but the discovery of other more legible signatures proved that at this spot important and highly artistic works had been produced. The occurrence of a monogram upon several, with the comparison of their technical details, has led to the recognition of many pieces, and revealed the fact that this fabrique had existed from an early period, and was productive of a large number of pieces of varying quality.

M. Jacquemart surmises that at Caffaggiolo Luca della Robbia learnt the nature of the enamel glaze, which he applied to his relievos in terra cotta. We know that Luca painted subjects on plain surfaces, enamelled with the stanniferous glaze as early as the year 1456, when he executed the painted tiles which form a kind of framing to the tomb of Benozzo Federighi in the church of San Francesco de Paolo, under the hill of Bellosguardo. The most important work by him of this nature is the lunette over one of the doors in the entrance-hall of the "Opera del Duomo" in Florence. Whether, learnt from him, this enamel was adopted at the Grand Ducal *fabrique* at an early period, or whether he there obtained the knowledge which he applied and modified to his own uses, remains a question, the answer to which would be facilitated by the proved date of the establishment of that pottery, or the occurrence of pieces anterior to the tiles enamelled and painted by Luca; but upon these points we unfortunately have not as yet discovered any recorded memorial.

It is worthy of remark that although many are of very early date no piece of a *Mezza* ware, confidently assignable to this establishment, is known to the writer; all that have come under his notice are enamelled with the white stanniferous glaze, no instance of the use of an *engobe* or slip having been observed. The woodcut p. 90 is from an early and probably Tuscan plateau.

The leading characteristics of the Caffaggiolo wares are a glaze of rich and even quality, and purely white; and the use of a very dark cobalt blue of great intensity but brilliant as that of lapis lazuli, frequently in masses as a grounding to the subject: and it would seem laid on purposely with a coarse brush, the strokes of which are very apparent. We give an engraving p. 91 of a curiously decorated tazza of early date. The colours are green, purple and blue. A bright yellow, an orange of brilliant but opaque quality, a peculiarly liquid and semi-transparent copper green are also found, and another characteristic pigment is an opaque bright Indian red. This pottery has a nearer affinity to

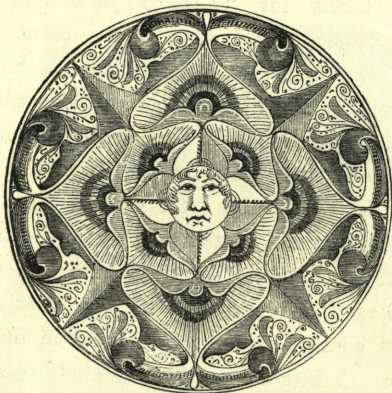
that of Siena than to any other fabrique, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that they had a like origin or that the establishment at Siena emanated from Caffaggiolo. Both resemble in general style the pieces produced at Faenza and Forlì more than those of



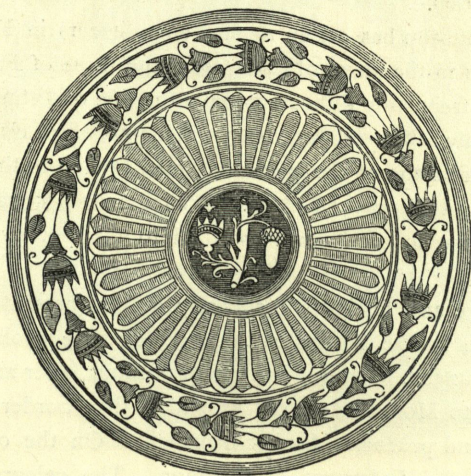
other fabriques of the northern duchies, or of the Umbrian centres of the art; and it becomes a question as to which can claim the earliest origin, as also the earliest use of the stanniferous enamel glaze. The dates inscribed upon pieces begin in 1507-9, but undated examples, assignable to this locality and of an earlier period, exist in collections.

The use of the metallic lustre seems to have been tried at

Caffaggiolo, but from the extreme rarity of examples bearing the mark of or fairly ascribable to that establishment, we may



perhaps infer that only a few experimental pieces were made, and that this method of enrichment was but little used. A small



plateau at South Kensington, no. 7154, represented in the woodcut is an important example, having the mark. As might be

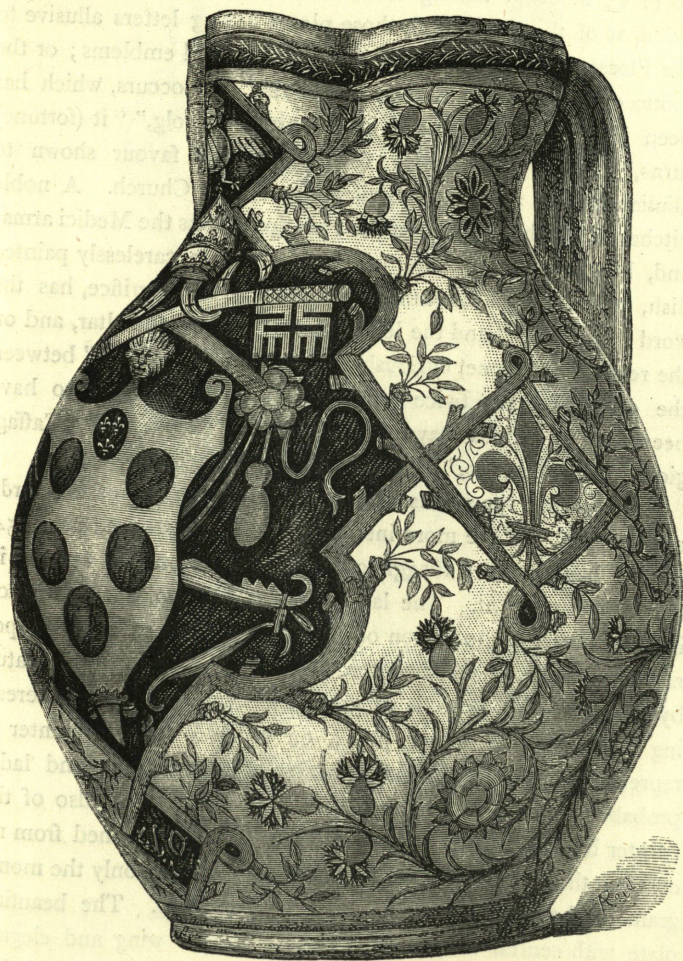
expected, the arms, emblems, and mottoes of the Medici family frequently occur, and occasionally the letters S. P. Q. F. are introduced on labels for "*Senatus populusque Florentinus*." M. Jacquemart considers that some of the early groups, &c. in relief and in the round and early plaques with the sacred emblem, the majority of which are generally ascribed to Faenza, may be of this bottega. We quite concur with him in this opinion.

The South Kensington museum is rich in fine specimens of this ware of various date and great variety, some of which are among the most admirable examples of the potter's art. It is remarkable that we have no recorded names of the artists who painted these beautiful pieces, and it is only at the latter end of the sixteenth century that we find mention of Giacomo and Loys Ridolfi of Caffaggiolo, who emigrated with other potters from the then less encouraged manufactories of Italy to try their fortune in France. M. Jacquemart tells us that these potters or painters founded a "*faïencerie*" in 1590 at Marchecoul, in Bretagne.

Some confusion has arisen among connoisseurs in France and elsewhere as to the wares of Caffaggiolo and those of Faenza, and indeed it is frequently difficult to draw the line of distinction; but we can hardly follow M. Jacquemart in his historical classification, believing that some of the pieces assigned by him to this fabrique do not really support their claim. A similar remark may apply to many of those in the Louvre ascribed to this pottery by Mons. Darcel.

Two large and finely painted early dishes (presented by Mr. Franks) are in the British museum; they were probably made about 1480-1500. On one is a group of saints, after an engraving by Benedetto Montana, on red ground, with a border of leafage moulding and peacock's feather ornament. On the other is the subject of the Judgment of Solomon. The colours on these pieces are very rich, with much of the characteristic red pigment; the bold and firm drawing has an archaic tendency which points

to an early period. The earliest dated piece having a mark and with reason believed to be of this fabrique, is a plate in the style

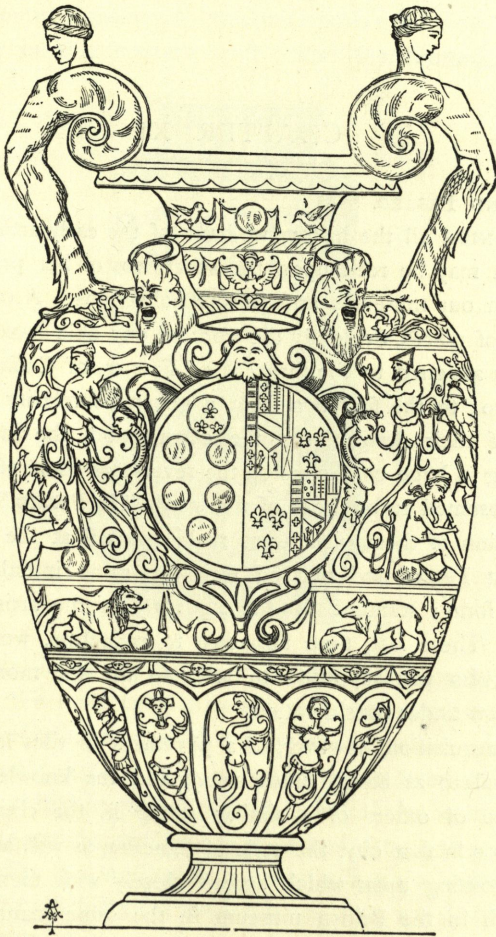


of Faenza with border of grotesques and central shields of arms, in the painting of which the characteristic red is used and

on which is the date 1507 with the mark; that curious combination of letters P.L and O. Another is dated 1509. The letters S. P. Q. F. occur among the ornaments. M. Jacquemart considers as of the first period, those pieces having letters allusive to the Florentine republic, or the Medici arms and emblems; or the motto of Giuliano di Medici. "Glovis" also occurs, which has been ingeniously deciphered as meaning "Si volg," "it (fortune) turns," if read backwards: referring to the favour shown to Giuliano when appointed Gonfalonier to the Church. A noble pitcher at South Kensington no. 1715 (p. 93) has the Medici arms; and, beneath, also the motto *Glovis*. A large carelessly painted dish, in the British museum, the subject Abel's sacrifice, has the word "GLOVIS" and the letters S. P. Q. R. on the altar, and on the reverse the name, curiously spelt, "In Chafaggilolo" between the ordinary mark twice repeated. The name seems to have been spelt in various ways, as "Caffagiulo," "Cafagiol," "Caffaggiolo," "Chaffaggiolo," "Chafaggilolo," "Gafagizotto," &c.

Some of the specimens at South Kensington are of extraordinary beauty. Of the more interesting may be instanced no. 7154, lusted, having the Caffaggiolo mark painted on the reverse in the yellow pigment. The large circular dish no. 8928 on which is represented a procession of Leo X. is curious as a contemporary work and for the costume. The St. George after the statue by Donatello, no. 1726, is of great excellence, as is the interesting plate engraved above, p. 44, on which a ceramic painter is represented at work in the presence of a gentleman and lady, probably portraits of personages of high standing, as also of the painter himself. It is to be regretted that he refrained from recording their names and was content with affixing only the monogram of the fabrique at the back of the piece. The beautiful plate with central subject of Vulcan forging a wing and elegant border of grotesques, masks, cupids, &c., no. 2990, is probably by the same hand as the two last referred to and is a fine example. The large jug already referred to having the Medici

arms on the front and other devices of that family, no. 1715, is remarkable for its excellence of glaze and colour, as well as for



its historical associations. So, again, is the vase no. 321 made for the Medici at a somewhat later date; and which we also engrave.

CHAPTER XI.

SIENA AND PESARO.

WELL-NIGH all the history we have of the early artistic pottery of SIENA may be read upon the specimens of her produce, preserved in our museums and private collections. A considerable number of pieces, evidently the work of one able hand, has been variously assigned to the furnaces of Faenza, of Caffaggiolo, and of Pesaro; to the first two from a general similarity in the character of their design. On the other hand, the initials I. P. occurring in large characters on the reverse of some of the pieces were presumed to be those of the words "In Pesaro," and led to a confusion of them with others really painted at the Lanfranchi works at Pesaro and marked with the same initials but in a smaller form; standing for the signature of the artist, "*giacomo pinsit.*" These last, then unknown to collectors, were cited by Passeri who was supposed to refer to the far more beautiful works now under consideration.

The acquisition, however, of a pavement of tiles from the Petrucci palace at Siena, dated 1509, and the knowledge of the existence of others of a similar stamp in the church of San Francesco in that city, the style of handling as well as the design and colouring upon which agreed closely with these works; a fine dish in the British museum in the same manner, and on which occurs one of the same coats of arms as those upon the pavement of the Petrucci; and the further acquisition of a small plate, the painting of which in blue camaïeu is assuredly in the manner of the finer examples above referred to, and which is

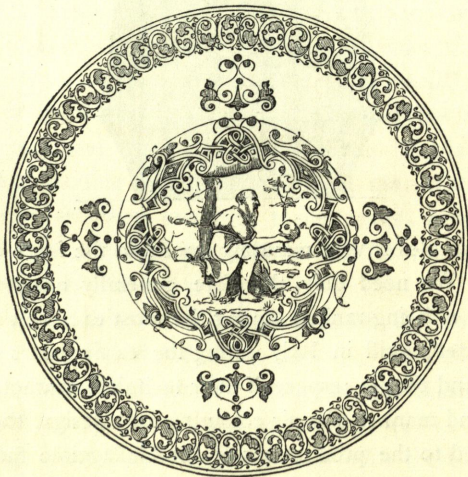
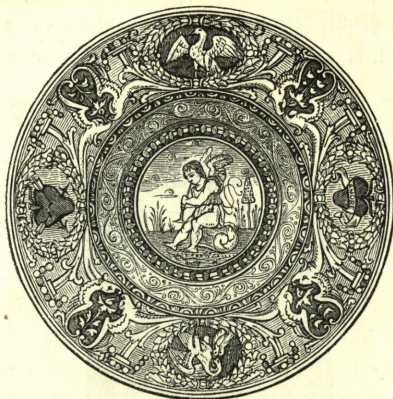
signed on the reverse "*fata i Siena da m benedetto*;" form together a chain of evidence conclusive as to the existence of this fabrique, and the origin of the various pieces in question.

The South Kensington museum possesses very important specimens of this master's work; and the connexion of the

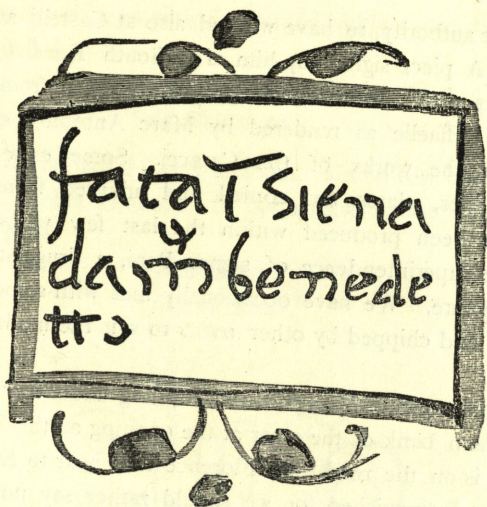


several examples is very minutely traced in the large catalogue of Maiolica. We need only, therefore, generally observe that they are worthy of being ranked among the most excellent productions of the potter's skill in Italy during the earlier years of the 16th century; and that in respect of their technical characteristics, and the tone and manner of their colouring and design, they are more nearly allied to the productions of the Caffaggiolo furnaces, from which in all probability the inspiration of them was derived. We give woodcuts of three of these beautiful pieces: nos. 1569, 1792, and 4487. The last of these is very interesting on account of the mark and inscription upon the reverse (also engraved P. 99), showing that the painter was probably Benedetto himself,

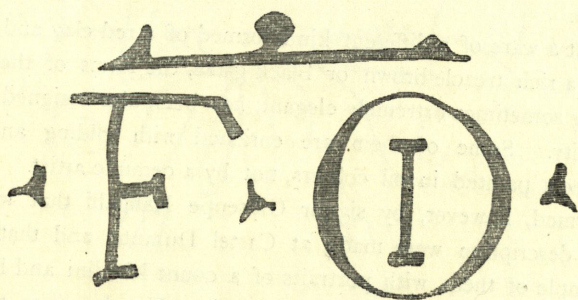
who was then the head of the establishment. The drawing of the central figure is masterly and finished with the utmost care.



One of the finest specimens of this master belongs to Mr. Henderson; the central subject is that of Mutius Scævola before Porsenna; it is painted with great care and is surrounded by a border of grotesques on orange ground. On the reverse is the



mark in the accompanying woodcut. The grotesques upon the



border of a large dish in the British museum are painted upon a black ground, an unusual style which also occurs on some of the tiles of the Petrucci pavement, and is we believe almost peculiar to this bottega.

We lose sight of the Sienese pottery for two centuries, when it again appears under the then best ceramic painter in Italy, Ferdinando Maria Campani who is said, but we do not know on

what exact authority, to have worked also at Castelli and at San Quirico. A piece signed by him is at South Kensington. His subjects, as in this instance, were frequently taken from the Bible series of Raffaello as rendered by Marc Antonio's engravings, and from the works of the Caracci. Some extremely well executed tiles, plates, &c. copied and adapted from the old, have also been produced within the last few years at Siena under the superintendence of signor Pepi, a druggist, opposite the Prefecture. We have occasionally met with some of these, scratched and chipped by other *artists* to suit the modern-antique market.

The small town of MONTE LUPO, nestling under its "rocca" on the southern bank of the river at the opening of the Val d' Arno inferiore, is on the road from Florence and near to Empoli. Its pottery is distinguished (or we should rather say notorious) for having produced the ugliest and most inferior painted pieces that bear the signature of their maker and the place where they were made.

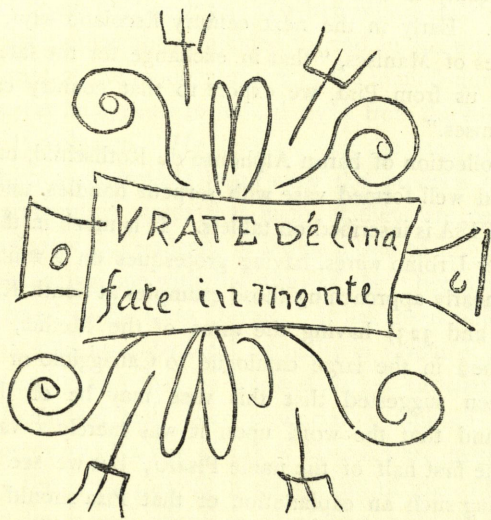
But a ware of a different kind formed of a red clay and glazed with a rich treacle-brown or black glaze, the forms of the pieces being sometimes extremely elegant, has been also assigned to this locality. Some of them are enriched with gilding and with subjects painted in oil colours, not by a ceramic artist. We are informed, however, by signor Giuseppe Raffaelli that wares of this description were made at Castel Durante, and that a fine example of them, with portraits of a count Maldini and his wife, is preserved in the library at Urbania. He describes them as made of a red earth covered with an intensely black glaze, on which the oil painting and gilding were executed. It is nevertheless probable that Monte Lupo produced a similar ware, and pieces occur ornamented with reliefs and with raised work, *engobé*, with a white or yellow clay on the brown ground, by the process known as *pâte sur pâte*. Certain pieces marbled on the surface to imitate tortoiseshell, agate, &c. are ascribed to this pottery.

At Sèvres is a tazza with ill painted subject on white ground and inscribed,—

*"Dipinta Giovinale Tereni
"da Montelupo."*

and a dish in the hôtel Cluny at Paris, painted with the subject of the rape of Helen somewhat in the manner of the Urbino wares, has at the back,

*"Vrate dëlina
"fate in Monte."*



This, we think, more likely to have been the production of Monte Lupo than of Monte Feltro, to which it has been ascribed.

There can be little doubt that potteries existed in the neighbourhood of the important commercial city of PISA, and it is more than probable that the painted and incised *bacini*, which are encrusted into her church towers and façades, are mostly of local manufacture during the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries. On this subject we must refer the reader to the remarks in the

chapter on Persian and Hispano-moresque wares. Among the latter, references will be found to two writers who stated that a commerce existed between Valencia and Pisa, from whence faïence was imported into Spain in exchange for the wares of that country. It does not however follow that this faïence was entirely of Pisan production, although exported thence; but it is not improbable that a considerable quantity was made there for exportation.

Antonio Beuter, praising the wares of Spain, says that they are equal in beauty to those of Pisa and other places. This was about 1550. Early in the next century Escolano says, speaking of the wares of Manises, "that in exchange for the faïences that Italy sends us from Pisa, we export to that country cargoes of that of Manises."

In the collection of baron Alphonse de Rothschild, of Paris, is a large and well formed vase with serpent handles, under which the name PISA is inscribed on tablets. It is much in the manner of the later Urbino wares, having grotesques on a white ground, but more nearly approaching those examples at South Kensington (nos. 321 and 323) having the arms of the Medici, which we have ascribed in the large catalogue to Caffaggiolo or Florence. It has been suggested that this vase may be of the Pesaro fabrique, and that the word upon it was merely a variation in spelling the first half of the name *Pisaro*; but we see no reason for accepting such an explanation or that Pisa should be denied the small honour of having produced this example, the only one inscribed with her name.

There can be very little doubt that a manufactory of glazed earthenware existed at PESARO or in its immediate outskirts from a very early period, and that it probably succeeded to the works established there in Roman times, the remains of which have occasionally been brought to light; but with the exception of the recorded names of certain potters, occurring in deeds and records which are preserved among the public archives of the

city, we are uninformed, and unable to recognize the produce of these potteries or to know their characteristics.

Anterior to 1540 we have no signed and dated example, and should therefore be reduced to the position of entire ignorance as to their previous productions but for the work of the indefatigable archæologist Giambattista Passeri. Born in 1694 at Farnese in the Campagna di Roma (where his father, of a patrician family of Pesaro, practised as a physician) and educated at Rome, he subsequently settled in his parental city and published the "*Istoria delle pitture in Maiolica fatte in Pesaro e in luoghi circonvicini*," in 1758. To him we are indebted for the notice of the potters above alluded to, and in his work he gives us an account of the mode pursued in the manufacture, much of which however he appears to have derived from the earlier manuscript of Piccolpasso. He tells us that the large early bacili enriched with a *madreperla* lustre were the produce of Pesaro; and in corroboration states that many of them are painted with the coats of arms and portraits of the members of noble Pesarese families, instancing one with the arms of the "Bergnaña" family then preserved in the Casa Olivieri. It has been objected that Passeri was influenced by local partiality in favour of the native city of his family, and that he ascribed to her furnaces what may in equal likelihood have been produced at Gubbio or Diruta; and the discovery of a few pieces of lustred ware, marked as the produce of the latter *Castello* in the middle of the 16th century, was hailed by several critics as conclusive evidence against his assertion.

It appears to the writer that such evidence is equally unsatisfactory, inasmuch as the works in question were produced some century and a half anterior to the earliest dated piece of Diruta ware. Passeri wrote in the middle of the last century, when the art was no longer in existence and its specimens only preserved in the cabinets of the curious; but he was a man of erudition and research and probably had means of obtaining information with

which we are unacquainted; we think therefore that as his statements have not yet been met by proofs of their incorrectness, or by counter-statements of greater weight, we are bound to accept them until additional light be thrown upon the subject. He tells us that remains of antique furnaces and ruins of a vase shop of classic times, with fragments of red and black wares and lamps marked with the letter G, were found in the locality known as the "Gabbice" where the Lanfranchi works were afterwards established in the 16th century, and where the earth is of fine quality. He traces the use of this earth in the time of the Goths, and states that it again revived under the government of the Malatesta; and that soon afterwards a mode of adorning churches was adopted by the insertion of discs of earthenware at first simply glazed with the oxide of lead, but that coloured ones were subsequently used.

The wares were made by covering the crude baked clay with a slip or *engobe* of white earth, the "*terra di San Giovanni*" from Siena, or with that of Verona, and glazing it with "*marzacotto*," a mixture of oxide of lead, sand and potash. The colours used were yellow, green, manganese black, and cobalt blue (from the "*zaffara*" of the Levant). During the government of the Sforza the manufacture greatly developed and was protected, for on 1st April 1486 a decree was made prohibiting the introduction of earthenwares for sale from other parts, except the jars for oil and water. This was confirmed in 1508. In 1510 a document enumerates "*Maiolica*" as one of the trades of Pesaro, naming also "*figoli*," "*vasai*," and "*boccalari*;" and we must bear in mind that there is good reason for believing that at that period "*Maiolica*" was a name technically understood as applying only to the lusted wares.

Passeri states that about 1450 the "*invetriatura*" or glazing had already begun to perfect itself under the Sforza, when those early pieces were produced decorated with "arabesque" borders encircling coats of arms, portraits, and ideal heads outlined with

manganese and coloured with the "*madreperla*" lustre, leaving the flesh white. He ascribes the improvement in the manufacture by the use of the stanniferous glaze to the discovery of the Della Robbia, and adds that, although the art of making it was known



earlier at Florence, the fine ware was only introduced at Pesaro about 1500: near which period the beautiful portrait dish which we engrave (no. 4078 at Kensington) was probably made. Here he again says that the lusted ware derived its name from the pottery of Maiolica, and that the earlier and coarser varieties were known as "*Mezza-maiolica*." Guid' Ubaldo II. greatly encouraged the art, and in 1552 granted to Bernardin Gagliardino, Girolamo Lanfranchi, Ranaldo and others an edict prohibiting the importation of other wares for sale, thus confirming the former

acts, which would appear to have fallen into neglect: and in the year 1562, on the 1st of June, he granted another, confirming to Giacomo Lanfranco a protection of his art or patent for applying real gold to his wares.

Passeri then (after some further historical details) describes examples of the glazed and enamelled pottery of Pesaro which he had seen, and the earliest he refers to are floorings of tiles existing in his time, upon one of which, brought to him by a workman,

was inscribed

adi 4 de Genar
o . in Pesaro.

and on the other

1502.

A considerable period elapses between this and the next dated example, a plate, with the subject of Horatius Cocles, inscribed,—

Orazio solo contro Toscana tutta.

Fatto in Pesaro. 1541.

On another (a companion of a plate preserved in the Louvre),

l Pianetto di Marte

fatto in Pesaro 1542

in bottega da Mastro Gironimo Vasaro. I.P.

He further mentions a plate having a mark consisting of the initials O A connected by a cross, and a bas-relief with the same initials which again occur sculptured over a door, which he suggests may have been that of the potter's house; we should, however, be more disposed to regard it as a conventual or cathedral monogram.

We will now leave the work of Passeri and quote another record of the pottery made at Pesaro a short time before the 16th century, returning to him for information on the revival of the art at that locality in the last.

Dennistoun in his history of the dukes of Urbino (vol. 3, p. 388)

refers to a letter among the diplomatic archives of the duchy preserved at Florence dated 1474, from pope Sextus IV. in which he thanks Costanzo Sforza, lord of Pesaro, for a present of



most elegantly wrought earthen vases which for the donor's sake are prized as much as gold or silver instead of earthenware. Another letter from Lorenzo the magnificent to Roberto Malatesta of Pesaro, thanking him for a similar present, says, "they please me entirely by their perfection and rarity, being quite novelties in these parts, and are valued more than if of silver, the donor's arms

serving daily to recall their origin." There is every reason for assuming that both these presents consisted of wares produced at the Pesaro furnaces.

These wares must have been looked upon as "novelties" at Florence, not simply because they were painted on flat surfaces covered with stanniferous glaze (for Luca della Robbia had done this many years before) but because, being decorated with rich metallic glaze and madreperla lustre, they probably were novelties to the Florentines as productions of an Italian pottery. If this inference be correct, may not another be drawn from it? That these presents being the produce of Pesaro, and enriched with the metallic lustre, we may derive from the whole matter an additional proof that the early lusted pieces, whose origin has been disputed, were really made at that city; and that we may agree with Passeri in ascribing the well-known "bacili" to that place. Engraved p. 107 is a fine lusted *bacile* at South Kensington, probably of Pesaro ware, and about the year 1510.

The earliest dated Pesaro piece is in the possession of the writer. It is a "*fruttiera*," on which is painted the creation of animals by the Almighty, Who, moving in the midst, is surrounded by animals rising out of the ground; a distant landscape, with a town (!) on the side of a steep mountain, forms the background.

On the reverse is inscribed as in the woodcut on the next page,

1540.

*Chrianite anim
allis Christtus
fatto in Pesaro.*

We have seen some large dishes decorated with raised masks, strapwork, &c. and painted with grotesques on a white ground, and subject panels, and other grandiose pieces which are ascribed to the Urbino artists, but which may in equal likelihood be attributed to the Lanfranchi of Pesaro. A triangular plateau in the

possession of Mrs. Hope has the character of their finest productions.

The art at Pesaro rapidly declined after 1560, wanting the encouragement of a reigning ducal court; and Passeri ascribes

1540
 Chiarite anini
 Callis (Christus)
 fatto in pesaro

much evil influence to what he considers the bad taste of preferring the unmeaning designs of the oriental porcelain, which was greatly prized by the wealthy, and the painting after the prints of the later German school of Sadeler, &c. to the grander works of the old masters; the landscapes were, however, well executed. He gives us also a history of the revival of the manufacture in his own time, under the influence and encouragement of the cardinal prelate Ludovico Merlini. In 1718 there was only one potter at Pesaro, Alfonzo Marzi, who produced the most ordinary wares. In 1757 signor Giuseppe Bertolucci, an accomplished ceramist of Urbania, in conjunction with signor Francesco di Fattori, engaged workmen and artists and commenced a fabrique, but it was soon abandoned. Again in 1763 signors Antonio Casali and Filippo Antonio Caligari, both of Lodi, came to Pesaro and were joined by Pietro Lei da Sassuolo of Modena, an able painter on Maiolica; they established a

fabrique producing wares of great excellence hardly to be distinguished from the Chinese. In the Debruge-Labarte collection was a one-handled jug or pot, painted with flowers in white medallions on a blue ground, and on the foot engraved in the paste—

“Pesaro 1771.”

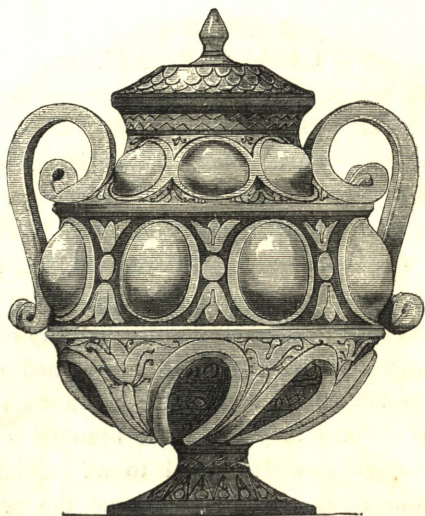
A manufacture at present exists of painted tiles for pavement, removed to Pesaro from Urbania, and which at one time produced vases and plates in the manner of the Urbino istoriati pieces as also lusted wares after the style of M. Giorgio. It has, we are informed, ceased making these imitations and now confines itself to the first-named class of goods.

CHAPTER XII.

GUBBIO AND CASTEL DURANTE.

ALTHOUGH probably not among the earliest manufactories or *botege* of Italian enamelled and painted wares, GUBBIO undoubtedly holds one of the most prominent positions in the history and development of the potter's art in the 16th century. This small town, seated on the eastern slope of the Apennines, was then incorporated in the territory of the dukes of Urbino under whose influence and enlightened patronage the artist potters of the duchy received the greatest encouragement; and were thus enabled to produce the beautiful works of which so many examples have descended to us. Chiefly under the direction of one man, it would seem that the produce of the Gubbio furnaces was for the most part of a special nature; namely, a decoration of the pieces with the lustre pigments, producing those brilliant metallic ruby, golden, and opalescent tints which vary in every piece, and which assume almost every colour of the rainbow as they reflect the light directed at varying angles upon their surface. The woodcut (p. 112) represents a vase of great interest and beauty; no. 500 in the South Kensington collection. It is early in date; probably about 1500. The admirable way in which the moulded ornament is arranged to show the full effect of the lustre, and the bold yet harmonious design are worthy of observation. That the Gubbio ware was of a special nature, and produced only at a few fabriques almost exclusively devoted to that class of decoration, is to be reasonably inferred from Piccolpasso's statement; who speaking of the

application of the maiolica pigments says, "*Non ch' io ne abbia mai fatto ne men veduto fare.*" He was the maestro of an important bottega at Castel Durante, one of the largest and most productive of the Umbrian manufactories, within a few miles also



of those of Urbino, with which he must have been intimately acquainted and in frequent correspondence. That he, in the middle of the 16th century, when all these works were at the highest period of their development, should be able to state that he had not only never applied or even witnessed the process of application of these lustrous enrichments is, we think, a convincing proof that they were never adopted at either of those seats of the manufacture of enamelled pottery. Although much modified and improved, lustre colours were not invented by Italian artists, but were derived from the potters of the east, probably from the Moors of Sicily, of Spain, or of Majorca. Hence (we once more repeat) the name "Majolica" was originally applied only to wares having the lustre enrichment; but since the decline of the

manufacture, the term has been more generally given : all varieties of Italian enamelled pottery being usually, though wrongly, known as "Maiolica."

The Gubbio fabrique was in full work previous to 1518; and



the brilliantly lustred dish, which we engrave, now at South Kensington is before that date. That some of these early *bacili* so well known and apparently the work of one artist were made at Pesaro, whence the secret and probably the artist passed to Gubbio, is far from improbable. The reason for this emigration is not known, but it may be surmised that the large quantity

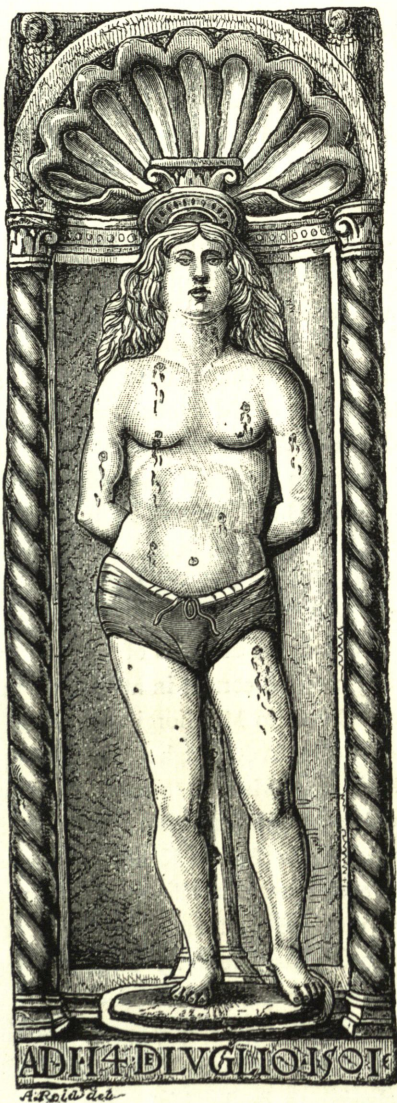
of broom and other brush-wood, necessary for the reducing process of the reverberatory furnace in which this lustre was produced, might have been more abundantly supplied by the hills of Gubbio than in the vicinity of the larger city on the coast. That the process of producing these metallic effects was costly, we gather from Piccolpasso's statement that sometimes not more than six pieces out of a hundred succeeded in the firing.

The fame of the Gubbio wares is associated almost entirely with one name, that of Giorgio Andreoli. We learn from the marchese Brancaloni that this artist was the son of Pietro, of a "Castello" called "Judeo," in the diocese of Pavia; and that, accompanied by his brother Salimbene, he went to Gubbio in the second half of the 15th century. He appears to have left and again returned thither in 1492, accompanied by his younger brother Giovanni. They were enrolled as citizens on the 23rd May 1498, on pain of forfeiting 500 ducats if they left the city in which they engaged to continue practising their ceramic art. Patronised by the dukes of Urbino, Giorgio was made "castellano" of Gubbio. Passeri states that the family was noble in Pavia. It is not known why or when he was created a "Maestro," a title prized even more than nobility, but it is to be presumed that it took place at the time of his enrolment as a citizen; his name with the title "Maestro" first appearing on a document dated that same year, 1498. Piccolpasso states that Maiolica painters were considered noble by profession. The family of Andreoli and the "Casa" still exist in Gubbio, and it was asserted by his descendant Girolamo Andreoli, who died some 40 years since, that political motives induced their emigration from Pavia.

Maestro Giorgio was an artist by profession, not only as a draughtsman but as a modeller, and being familiar with the enamelled terra cottas of Luca della Robbia is said to have executed with his own hands and in their manner large altar-pieces. We were once disposed to think that great confusion

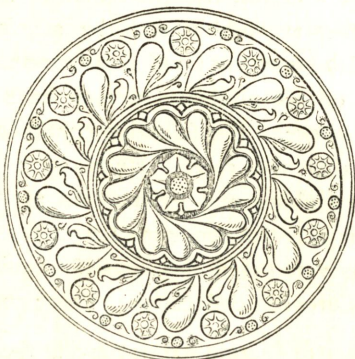
existed in respect to these altar-pieces in rilievo, and were inclined to the belief that although some of the smaller lusted works may have been modelled by Giorgio the larger altar-pieces were really only imported by him. Judging from the most important which we have been able to examine, the "Madonna del Rosario" portions of which are in the museum at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, it seemed to approach more nearly to the work of some member of the Della Robbia family. This fine work is in part glazed, and in part coloured in distemper on the unglazed terra cotta, in which respect it precisely agrees with works known to have been executed by Andrea della Robbia assisted by his sons. There are no signs of the application of the lustre colours to any portion of the work, but this might be accounted for by the great risk of failure in the firing, particularly to pieces of such large size and in high relief. Be this as it may, from a further consideration of the style of this work and the record of others, some of which are heightened with the lustre colours, and the fact stated by the marchese Brancaloni that a receipt for an altar-piece is still preserved in the archives of Gubbio, we are inclined to think that history must be correct in attributing these important works in ceramic sculpture to M^o Giorgio Andreoli. If they were his unassisted work, he deserves as high a place among the modellers of his period as he is acknowledged to have among artistic potters.

To go back twelve years in the history of the products of this fabrique, we have in the South Kensington museum a very interesting example of a work in rilievo, no. 2601, a figure of S. Sebastian, lusted with the gold and ruby pigments, and dated 1501. Notwithstanding its inferiority of modelling when compared with later works, we are in little doubt that this is by M^o Giorgio's own hand, agreeing as it does in the manner of its painted outline and shading with the treatment of subjects on the earlier dishes, believed to be by him. We must also bear in mind that an interval of twelve years had elapsed between this comparatively crude work, and that beautiful altar-piece whose

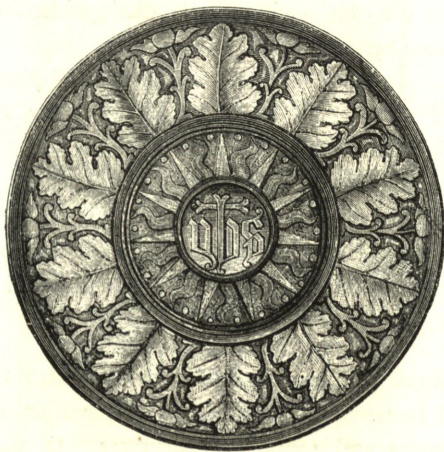


excellence causes us some doubt in ascribing it to his unaided hand; and we may observe at the same time an equal difference

in the merit of his own painted pieces. The small bowl here engraved is of about this period, and is characteristic of a style of



ornament commonly found upon Gubbio ware. This is now at South Kensington. We add also another piece, no. 8906; well worth the attention of a student, as exhibiting the full power



attainable by the introduction of the lustre tints. The yellow has a full rich golden tone, and the ruby a pure vivid red.

Passeri states that Giorgio brought the secret of the ruby lustre

with him from Pavia, and M. Jacquemart infers that he must have produced works at Pavia before going to Gubbio; but we are inclined to think with Mr. Robinson that it was from an artist previously working at Gubbio that he acquired the art and the monopoly of the ruby tint; and it is by no means improbable that this artist, or his predecessor, may have emigrated from Pesaro as stated above. The following conclusions arrived at by Mr. Robinson after the careful study of a vast number of examples of the Gubbio and other works are endorsed by the writer, who, having contributed some few of the facts upon which those conclusions were based, has himself examined the contents of the principal European collections. Those conclusions are:—

- 1st. That maestro Giorgio did not invent the ruby lustre, but succeeded to and monopolized the use of a pigment, used by an earlier artist of Gubbio.
- 2d. That the signed works were really painted by several distinct hands.
- 3d. That his own work may be distinguished with approximate certainty.
- 4th. That probably nearly all the "istoriati" pieces (1530-50) of Urbino, Castel Durante, or other fabriques, enriched with lustre, were so decorated by a subsequent operation at the Giorgio bottega; and,
- 5th. Consequently, the use of lustre colours was mainly confined to Gubbio, where painted wares by Xanto and other artists working at Urbino and other places were sent to be lustred.

Before entering upon the subject of maestro Giorgio's own works it will be necessary to glance at the earlier productions of his predecessors and probable instructors. In the absence of more positive evidence of the manufacture of early lustred wares at Pesaro, and with a view to keeping all the lustred wares together as much as possible, we have thought it more convenient

to include in the large catalogue those pieces which may probably have been made at that city among the lusted wares of Gubbio, always affixing to each such piece the name of Pesaro and of Gubbio with a (?), and arranging them as a separate class. And in order to facilitate the methodical study of the rise and development of the art at Gubbio we have classified the lusted wares in the following manner, and in probable sequence of date :—

- A. Works ascribed to Pesaro (or Gubbio?), the typical “bacili” referred to by Passeri, &c.
- B. Works believed of the early master who preceded M° Giorgio at Gubbio.
- C. Works ascribed to maestro Giorgio’s own hand.
- D. Works of the fabrique, and pieces painted by unknown artists, though bearing the initials of the master.
- E. Works by the artist signing N. and by his assistants.
- F. Works painted by other artists at other fabriques, and subsequently lusted at Gubbio.
- G. Works of M° Prestino, and of the later period.

Of the first class A. are those early “mezza-maiolica” dishes having a lustre of a peculiar pearly effect : these are frequently painted with portraits and armorial bearings, and have by many writers been ascribed to the Diruta potteries. At South Kensington, no. 7160 is a characteristic example of the usual type, while in no. 1606 we have an early specimen of the ruby lustre. On the back of no. 3035 is found the only mark with which I am acquainted on pieces of this class ; the well-known Gubbio scroll executed in manganese colour on the course yellow glaze.

Class B. is important as connecting the former with the works of the Gubbio furnaces. No 7682 is a typical piece, bearing another variety of the Gubbio scroll mark in dark colour.

Class C. contains of course the cream of the manufacture, being the works assigned to M° Giorgio’s own hand. The

museum series is very complete, containing specimens from the earliest period of his unsigned work. The deep tazza and large plateau, both of which we engrave, are admirable examples of this period. The first dated piece in any collection which we have every reason to believe a work of maestro Giorgio, is the



rilievo of S. Sebastian (shown in the woodcut, p. 116). Other but undated works in rilievo exist, which, as in this instance, are heightened with the gold and ruby pigments. The earliest example having a mark which may perhaps be that of Giorgio, and painted by him, is a small plate in the possession of Monsignore Cajani; a central medallion with half figure of S. Petronio, surrounded by a border of the style of the early wares, beautifully and carefully drawn and lustred with ruby and gold;

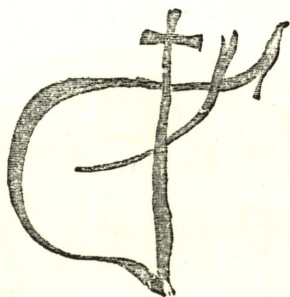
it is marked at the back with a sort of G, intersected by a cross and a paraphe, or flourish : see p. 122.

We now come to the period of Giorgio's signed pieces, some of the first of which show to what perfection he had brought his art.



The earliest known signed and dated piece is in the collection of Mr. Robert Napier; the border is decorated with trophies, &c. among which occurs the date 1517 written in blue, while at the back 1518 is pencilled in lustre colours. Another plate of the same service and having the same initials of the owner, a piece of exceeding beauty for the quality of the lustre colours, is in the

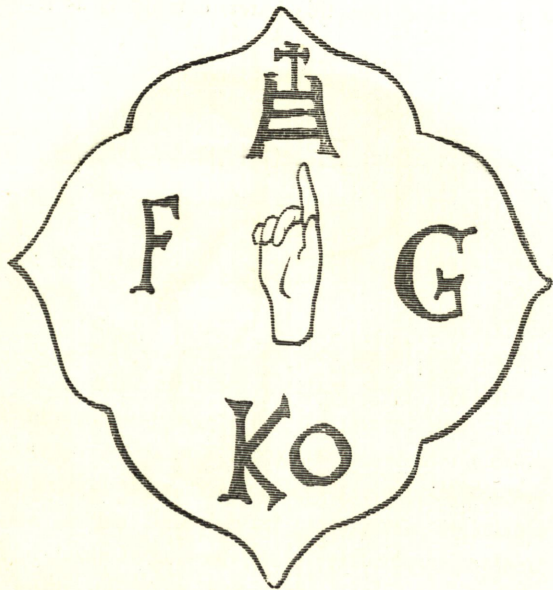
British museum ; we give (p. 123) a facsimile of the central initials and of the date on the back : and also a woodcut (p. 124), from a small tazza at South Kensington of about the same period.



Mr. Robinson speaks of this specimen as "being of the most perfect technique of the master ; and that, although he was not a powerful draughtsman, yet this single piece would suffice to establish his claims as a colourist."

M^o Giorgio's manner of decoration consists of foliated scrolls and other ornaments terminating in dolphins, eagles, and human heads, trophies, masks, &c. ; in the drawing of which he exhibited considerable power with great facility of invention. These "grotesche" differ materially from those of Urbino and Faenza, approaching more to the style of some of the Castel Durante designs. In the drawing of figures, and of the nude, Giorgio cannot be ranked as an artist of the first class. From 1519 his signature, greatly varied, occurs through succeeding years. It would be useless to repeat the many varieties, several of which will be seen in the large catalogue and among the marks on specimens in other collections. We believe that to whim or accident may be ascribed those changes that have tasked the ingenuity of connoisseurs to read as other names. His finer and more important pieces were generally signed in full "Maestro Giorgio da Ugubio" with the year, and sometimes the day of the month.

About the year 1525 he executed some of his most beautiful works; perhaps the finest large dish, and of the highest quality which has been preserved to us, was lately in the possession of the baronne de Parpart; we understand that it has been sold for



1518

£880. In that piece a rich grotesque border surrounds the subject of Diana and her nymphs, surprised by Actæon; on p. 125 is a fac-simile, half size, of the signature at the back.

In the next division D. are the works of the fabrique under Giorgio's direction, and pieces which though manifestly painted by other hands are signed in lustre with his initials or full signa-

ture. We have no means of learning what part his brothers undertook in the manufactory. A separate division has also been formed of the works ascribed to or signed by the artist who used the letter N, variously formed, as his monogram. Mr. Robinson has ingeniously suggested that this letter, containing as it does the



three, V I and N, may really have been adopted by "Vincenzio," the only one of his sons known to have assisted. He succeeded M^o Giorgio in the fabrique, where he was generally known as M^o Cencio. Brancaleoni states that he worked with his father till 1536, when he married and set up for himself. There is little doubt that although M^o Giorgio may himself have occasionally applied the lustre pigments with his own brush to the pieces painted by

other artists at other places, the majority of those so enriched were executed by his son or assistants. M. Darcel thinks that this practice did not begin earlier than 1525, in which view we are inclined to agree.



Under division F. will be found works of this kind, among which the more interesting at South Kensington are no. 8886, a fine portrait plate ; 4726 having the painter's date and mark, and that of him who lusted it ; the very remarkable plaque 520, the work of Orazio Fontana, with the monogram of Giorgio ; and the small plate 8907, dated in lustre colour as late as 1549.

The last division G. contains works ascribed to him, and examples of the decadence of the lusted wares.

Before closing our observations on the splendid products of this abundant pottery, we will refer to several marks which occur on pieces in all probability made and painted there but some of which we are unable to explain. A plate with bust portrait of a warrior,

in the collection of M. Meurnier, of Paris, having four coats of arms on the border and the letters Y. A. E., is inscribed on the face with the name "Gabriel . da . Gubbio." This doubtless is a portrait plate, and the letters may allude to the families or individuals whose arms are blazoned. "Gualdo" is said to be inscribed on a brilliantly lustred specimen which we have failed to trace, and pieces in the Louvre have been doubtingly classed under that name by M. Darcel. A man's head, rudely sketched in lustre colours, occurs on the back of a plate in the British museum, more probably an artist's whim than an intentional mark. The letters MR combined occur on a lustred piece, perhaps a monogram of M. Prestino. The letter P, variously formed, may also probably be his initial.

About 1560-70 the use of the lustre pigments would seem to have been almost discontinued; the secret of their proper composition and manipulation was lost during the general decline of Italian artistic pottery, and the death of Guid' Ubaldo II. in 1574 was the "coup-de-grâce" to the already much deteriorated wares of the duchy.

Those beautiful colours, known to the Italians as "rubino," "cangiante," "madreperla," "a reverbero," and to the French as "reflet métallique," "nacré," &c. have been to a certain extent reproduced. Unfortunately many pieces made in the manufactory at Doccia have, after chipping and scratching, been palmed upon unwary amateurs as ancient specimens by unprincipled dealers at Florence and elsewhere. Some of these modern examples are in the ceramic gallery at South Kensington. The most successful reproduction of the famous lustre has however been made at Gubbio itself by an able young chemist and artist, Luigi Carocci. Some of his productions are excellent, though far from having those artistic qualities so apparent in the finer specimens of maestro Giorgio's work.

Although there can be little doubt that CASTEL DURANTE was one of the earliest sites of the manufacture of enamelled pottery.

in Italy, as well as one of the most fruitful not only of produce but of those potters who in their own city, and at other establishments founded by them in various parts of Italy, spread the fame of the Durantine wares and the Durantine artists throughout Europe, it is remarkable that so few pieces have descended to us, upon which the names of their authors are recorded, or of the "boteghe" in which they were produced. Long lists are given by Raffaelli and other writers, but to identify the works of their hands is generally denied us, from the absence of signed examples by which their style can be known.

From Castel Durante came the Pelliparii who on establishing themselves at the capital city of the duchy took the name of Fontana, to which is attached some of the greatest triumphs of their art. "Francesco," the able painter who probably worked at Urbino and afterwards at Monte Bagnolo near Perugia, was as he styled himself "Durantino." A new life seems to have been given to artistic pottery in Venice by the immigration of a Durantine artist Francesco del Vasaro in 1545; and even later in the history, when the independence of the duchy was oppressed and local patronage had waned, another potter, M^o Diomede Durante, tried his fortune at Rome. Others went to France, Flanders, and Corfu, spreading the art which attained important development at Nevers, at Lyons, and other French centres.

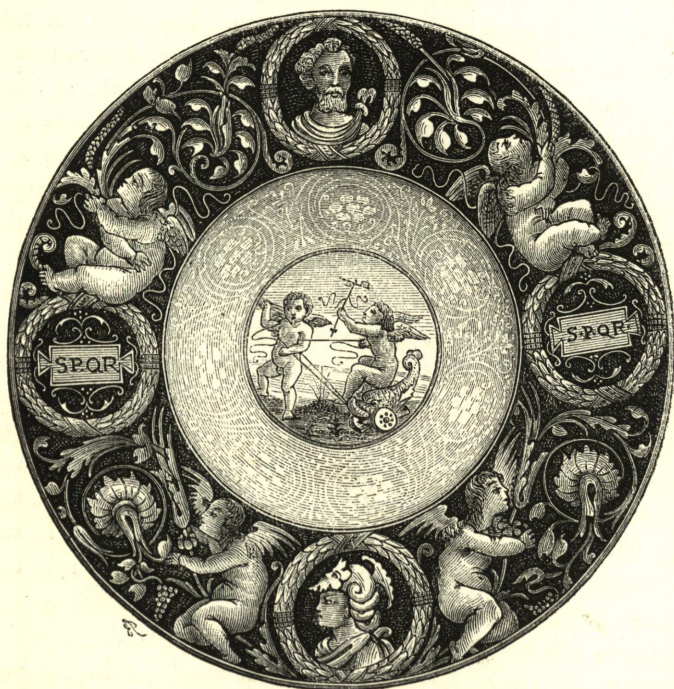
Castel Durante, which rose from the ruins of Castel Ripense in the thirteenth century, took the appellation of Urbania under the reign and in compliment to her native Pope, Urban VIII. It is now a small dull town on the banks of the Metauro, on the post-road from Urbino to Borgo San Sepolcro, and about thirteen Italian miles distant from the former city. The alluvial banks and deposits of the river furnished the material for her pottery.

Signor Raffaelli, in his valuable "Memorie," surmises that the manufacture of glazed pottery, as an art, was introduced at the time when monsignor Durante built a "Castello" at the badia of St. Cristoforo at Cerreto on the Metauro, in 1284, as a place of

security for the Guelphs. Seventy years afterwards in 1361 the then deceased maestro Giovanni dai Bistugi of Castel Durante is referred to, who probably was so named to distinguish him from the workers in glazed ware. This glazed ware was doubtless the ordinary lead glazed pottery or "mezza" ware, which preceded the use of that with stanniferous enamel and does not, as M. Darcel would suggest, afford any proof that the use of this enamel was known here before its application or stated discovery by Luca della Robbia. At that time even these lead glazed wares were little known, and it was not till 1300 that they seem to have become more generally adopted. Thenceforward their manufacture continued, for in 1364 a work is mentioned on the bank of the torrent Maltempo at "Pozzarelli," perhaps so named from the pits dug for extracting the loam. The early wares were coarse, painted with coats of arms and half figures, the flesh being left white and the dress in gay colours. In 1500 both the "mezza" and the enamelled wares, as well as the "sgraffio" work, were made. The beautiful "amatoria" plate which we engrave was about this date, and shows the beginning of a style of decoration which afterwards prevailed in a more developed form at this fabrique. The manufacture was at its perfection about 1525 and 1530, and continued to produce good wares even till 1580. It would appear that the great artists only painted the more important subject of the piece, leaving the ornamentation to be finished by the pupils and assistants.

Piccolpasso informs us that the earth or loam gathered on the banks of the Metauro, near Castel Durante, is of superior quality for the manufacture of pottery. A variety called "celestina" was used for making the seggers, "astucci," when mixed with the "terra rossa;" but for the finer class of work the loam deposited by the river which when washed was called "bianco allattato," and when of a blue shade of colour, was reserved for the more important pieces. The turnings of this variety mixed with the shavings of woollen cloth were used to attach the handles and

other moulded ornaments, and was known as "barbatina." The red pigment of Faenza, called "vergiliotto" was not used at Castel Durante. We presume this colour to be that ochreous red employed for heightening and shading the draperies, &c. by the painters of the Fontana fabrique at Urbino, and that of Lanfranco



at Pesaro, and some others ; if so, the absence or presence of it would be useful as evidence in determining the origin of a piece.

Signor Raffaelli thinks that many of the wares generally known as of Urbino were so called from the province, and frequently included those which were really the produce of Castel Durante. Passeri also speaks in high commendation of the Durantine wares, and Pozzi states that it was the rival of and only second to

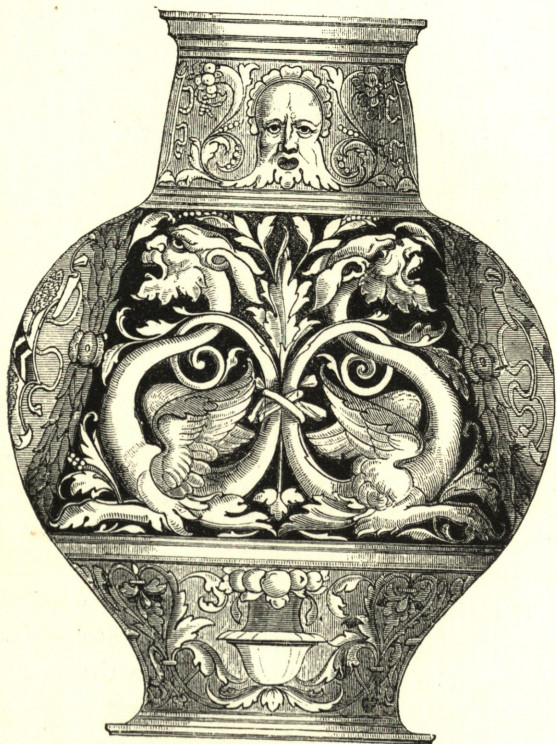
Faenza in the quality of its productions. The fatal blow to this branch of industry was the death of the last duke, Francesco Maria II. in 1631, when there being no longer a court the trade declined, money became scarce, and the artists emigrated.

Of signed examples of the wares of Castel Durante, the earliest piece known is the beautiful bowl belonging to Mrs. H. T. Hope which was exhibited in the Loan collection. The ground of this piece is of an intense dark and rich blue, entirely covered with a decoration of grotesques, among which occurs a shield of arms of the Della Rovere family surmounted by the papal tiara and the keys, proving it to have been made for pope Julius II.; trophies of books, festoons of drapery and, above, a boy angel holding a "veronica" or napkin impressed with the face of the Saviour. At the sides other trophies, satyrs, cupids, and interlaced foliage are richly and harmoniously disposed, among which are two labels inscribed respectively "*Iv. II. Pon. Max.*" and "*Tu, es, sacerdos. i eter.*" "In the design and execution of the painting," says Mr. Robinson, in his catalogue of that famous collection, "splendour of colour, and perfection of enamel glaze, this magnificent piece is a triumph of the art." On the same occasion Mr. Morland exhibited a piece by the same hand, and we think we recognize variations of the same manner in two examples now in the South Kensington museum, nos. 1728 and 1735.

In the rich and even quality of the glaze, the tendency to that form of decoration known as "a candelieri" (as in the vase engraved), mixed grotesques, trophies of musical instruments, and cupids, in a style of painting which is free and at the same time firm and sure, and in the full yet soft colouring, we see in Mrs. Hope's bowl a commencement of what became a very general manner in the decoration of the Durantine wares.

Of eleven years later we have the pharmacy jars which must have formed portions of a large and important service, one of which is in the British museum and another in the South Kensington-

ton. The signature on the British museum jar states, "*Ne la bottega d' Sebastiano d' Marforia,*" and "*A di xi de Ottobre fece 1519,*" and again at the base, "*In Castel durā.*" On p. 132 is a woodcut



of a mark in yellow, on a plate in the same museum, on which is the subject of Dido and Ascanius.

It would seem that this fabrique continued to flourish when those of Urbino and Pesaro had comparatively decayed; this may partly have been owing to the encouragement given by the duke Francesco Maria II. (1574 to 1631), who frequently resided at Castel Durante and took some interest in the manufacture. It

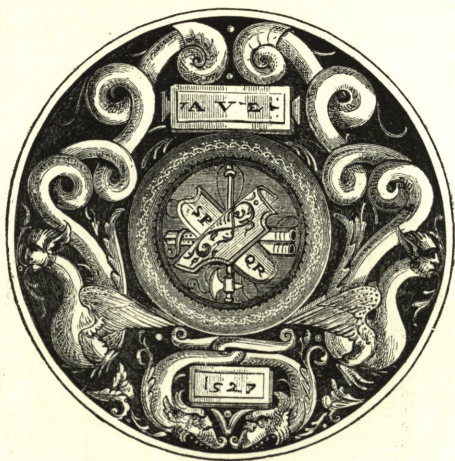
however only produced at this period works of more general utility, artistic and ornamental pieces being the exception.

The wares of Castel Durante are generally to be recognised by a pale buff coloured paste, and great richness and purity of the

1 5 2 6
jn castle
durante

glaze. The plates (of which we give three woodcuts, from examples at South Kensington, nos. 8947, 8960, and 413) are rarely decorated at the back, but like those of Urbino and Pesaro are generally edged with yellow on the subject pieces, and with grey white on those having grotesques, which are in low olive tint on a blue ground. The colours are sometimes rather pale but harmonious and the carnations are of an olive tint, thought by some a distinguishing mark of the fabrique; while the absence of the ochreous red pigment so noticeable on the Urbino and Pesaro "istoriati" pieces is remarkable. In the draperies painted upon these wares blue and ochreous yellow predominate. Broadly treated grotesques and trophies of arms, musical instruments, books, &c. frequently painted in *camàieu* of greenish grey

on a blue ground, are favourite subjects of ornament ; these also.



occur painted in rich colours, among which a deep clear brown



may be noted, and surrounding medallions having portrait or

fanciful heads on a yellow ground. Subject pieces do not appear to have been so abundantly painted at Castel Durante as at the neighbouring fabriques, and such pieces to which the lustre enrichment has been added are still less frequent.



Many of the tazze, the whole surfaces of which are covered with a portrait head, may probably be assigned to this place, where there would appear to have been one or two artists who made almost a specialty of this style of decoration. The South Kensington museum is rich in these portrait plates; among them is a remarkable example on which a likeness of Pietro Perugino in full face is portrayed (p. 135) and which we are disposed to assign to this fabrique, but always with some hesitation. Another class of pieces which we believe to have been for the most part made at Castel Durante is that ornamented with oak branches painted yellow on a blue ground, and sometimes in relief, surrounding a small medallion central portrait or imaginary head.

Castel Durante seems to have supplied a larger number of pharmacy jars, vases and bottles, than any other fabrique perhaps

with the exception of Faenza. The blue and yellow draperies of the earlier period were also a leading feature in the revival after 1730, and a washy green was also used; the drawing was good



and some of the landscape pieces excellent, of careful finish, soft colouring and good aerial perspective. It is very probable, however, that many pieces of this period were really the produce of Castelli or Naples.

CHAPTER XIII.

URBINO.

ALTHOUGH not to be ranked with the earliest seats of the manufacture of artistic pottery in Italy, there is no place so much associated with these beautiful productions of the potter's art as the small city of Urbino, whence, indeed, was derived one of the names by which it is distinguished. Crowning a steep among the many hills of Umbria, remarkable in the landscape from her picturesque position and the towering palace of her dukes, Urbino is one of those very curious cities with which Italy abounds, and which centre round themselves an individual history of the greatest interest. What giants of art and of literature were born or nurtured in that little town! now so neglected and unknown. He who, climbing the steep ascent and tortuous narrow streets, has visited the deserted halls and richly decorated cabinets of her palace, and has travelled through the beauteous scenery of her neighbourhood, to where the delicious valley of the Tiber bursts upon the sight, will never forget the impressions that they leave.

In proof of the antiquity of ceramic industry of a more ordinary kind in the vicinity of this city, Pungileoni tells us that an antique amphora was not long since discovered in the grounds of the Villa Gaisa, hard by the river Isauro, and that near to it were also found remains of a potter's furnace. This, however, does not prove the early establishment of a fabrique of glazed or enamelled decorative wares. Marryat states that in a register of Urbino dated 1477 one Giovanni di Donino Garducci is men-

tioned as a potter of that place, but it is not till 1501 that any further record occurs. In that year an assortment of vases, dishes, &c. were ordered to be made for the use of the cardinal di Carpaccio, and among them are mentioned "bacili" having the arms of the cardinal in the centre, and water "boccali" or jugs with little lions on the covers. The earliest pieces now known to us, which can with any certainty be ascribed to the potteries of Urbino, are probably those of the Gonzaga-Este service, which are undoubtedly the work of Nicola da Urbino; these must have been painted between the period of the marriage of the marquis with Isabella d' Este, in 1490, and before her death in 1539.

We have no account of the precise date at which the Pellipario, afterwards Fontana, family came from Castel Durante and settled at Urbino, but we have documentary proof that "Guido Niccolai Pellipario figulo da Durante," or "Guido, son of Nicola Pellipario, potter of Durante," was established at Urbino in 1520. From this period through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a number of pieces are dated and signed by various artists, or as having been made in the botteghe of various maestri of Urbino.

We are obliged to refer the reader to the large catalogue, in detail, of the South Kensington collection of maiolica, for an account of the works of the more important of these artists under their respective names, beginning with Nicola as the earliest of whom we have known examples; the Fontana family, and of Guido Durantino; the works of Fra Xanto; of Francesco Durantino; of the Patanazzi; not omitting those of other artists of the fabrique, of whom we have smaller record in remaining examples or documentary history. There seems little doubt that the revival or perhaps the first introduction of artistic ceramic manufacture to Urbino was under the influence of Guidobaldo I., and that many of the potters and nearly all the more important artists immigrated from Castel Durante. Long lists of names have been published by Raffaelli, but it is difficult to distinguish between

the more ordinary potters and the artists, whose works we are unable to recognise from the absence of signed specimens. Our space here will allow us to do little more than mention their names.

Considerable uncertainty exists and some confusion has arisen among connoisseurs in respect to the works of the very able artist Nicola da Urbino, and as to his connection with the Fontana family and fabrique at Urbino, the latter still a disputed and undecided question ; as also to the marks on various pieces attributable to his hand only, but which have been assigned by M. Jacquemart to the fabrique of Ferrara, and by other writers to various painters and localities. There are no pieces marked or signed by this artist in the South Kensington museum, but it possesses some examples of his work. A certain similarity in some of his less careful pieces has caused them, not unfrequently, to be attributed to Xanto, but a closer study of his manner will show it to be really very distinct.

The first signed piece is in the British museum, a plate, representing a sacrifice to Diana, and inscribed on the reverse as in the opposite woodcut. Comparing this mark with those of the Gonzaga-Este service, Mr. Franks arrived at the conclusion that they also were painted by Nicola in his most careful manner ; the clue thus found, he ingeniously deciphered the monogram on the beautiful fragment in the Sauvageot collection painted with a group from the Parnassus of Raffaele, as clearly and unmistakably by the same hand.

The manner of Nicola is remarkable for a sharp and careful outline of the figures, the features clearly defined but with much delicacy of touch, the eyes, mouth, and nostrils denoted by a clear black spot, the faces oval, derived from the Greek model, a free use of yellow and a pale yellow green, a tightening of the ankle and a peculiar rounding of the knee, the hair and beard of the older heads heightened with white ; the architecture bright and distinct ; the landscape background somewhat carefully

rendered in dark blue against a golden sky; and lastly, the stems of the trees, strangely tortuous, are coloured brown, strongly marked with black lines, as also are the rolled up clouds; these are treated in a manner not very true to nature.

Chome li a finiensi
 Sagrificharo
 a La dea diana
 Nicola da
 .V.

Few Maiolica painters have produced works of greater beauty than the plates of the Gonzaga-Este service, which are equally excellent in the quality of glaze and the brilliancy of colour.

With regard to the Fontana family, chiefs among Italian ceramic artists, we quote from the notice by Mr. Robinson appended to the Soulages catalogue. He tells us that "The celebrity of one member of this family has been long established by common consent. Orazio Fontana has always occupied the highest place in the scanty list of Maiolica artists, although at the same time nothing was definitely known of his works. Unlike their contemporary, Xanto, the Fontana seem but rarely to have signed their productions, and consequently their reputation as yet rests almost entirely on tradition, on incidental notices in writings which date back to the age in which they flourished, and on facts

extracted at a recent period from local records. No connected account of this family has as yet been attempted, although the materials are somewhat less scanty than usual. There can be no doubt that a considerable proportion of the products of the Fontana 'botege' is still extant, and that future observations will throw light on much that is now obscure in the history of this notable race of industrial artists. Orazio Fontana, whose renown seems to have completely eclipsed that of the other members of his family and in fact of all the other Urbinese artists, is first mentioned by Baldi, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in his eulogy of the state of Urbino pronounced before duke Francesco Maria II." "From documents cited by Raffaelli, it is established beyond doubt that the original family name was *Pellipario*, of Castel Durante, Fontana being an adopted surname; and it is not immaterial to observe that down to the latest mention of any one of the family (in 1605) they are invariably described as of Castel Durante." "The Fontana were undoubtedly manufacturers as well as artists, *i.e.*, they were the proprietors of 'vaserie.' Of the first Nicola, as we have only a brief incidental notice, nothing positive can be affirmed: but with respect to his son Guido, we have the testimony both of works still extant, and of contemporary documents. We know also that Guido's son Orazio also had a manufactory of his own, and the fact is established, that between 1565 and 1571 there were two distinct Fontana manufactories,—those of father and son. What became of Orazio's establishment after his death, whether continued by his brother Camillo, or reunited to that of the father, there is no evidence to show. With respect to the remaining members of the family, our information is of the scantiest kind. Camillo, who was inferior in reputation as a painter only to his elder brother, appears to have been invited to Ferrara by duke Alfonso II., and to have introduced the Maiolica manufacture into that city. Of Nicola, the third (?) son, we have only incidental mention in a legal document, showing that he was alive

in the year 1570. Guido, son of Camillo, lived till 1605; and of Flaminio, who may either have been son of Camillo or of Nicola, Dennistoun's vague notice asserting his settlement in Florence is all I have been able to collect. No signed pieces of Camillo, Flaminio, Nicola the second, or Guido the second, have as yet been observed.

"A considerable proportion of the Fontana maiolica is doubtless still extant; and it is desirable to endeavour to identify the works of the individual members of the family, without which the mere knowledge of their existence is of very little moment; but this is no easy task; although specimens from the hands of one or other of them are to be undoubtedly found in almost every collection, the work of comparison and collation has as yet been scarcely attempted. The similarity of style and technical characteristics of the several artists moreover, working as they did with the same colours on the same quality of enamel ground, and doubtless in intimate communication with each other, resolves itself into such a strong family resemblance, that it will require the most minute and careful observation, unremittingly continued, ere the authorship of the several specimens can be determined with anything like certainty. The evidence of signed specimens is of course the most to be relied on, and is indeed indispensable in giving the clue to complete identification in the first instance; but in the case of the Fontana family a difficulty presents itself which should be noticed in the outset. This difficulty arises in determining the authorship of the pieces signed '*Fatto in bottega*,' &c. &c.; a mode of signature, in fact, which proves very little in determining individual characteristics, inasmuch as apparently nearly all the works so inscribed are painted by other hands than that of the proprietor of the Vaseria. In cases, however, in which the artist has actually signed or initialed pieces with his own name, of course no such difficulty exists, but the certainty acquired by this positive evidence is as yet confined in the case of the Fontana family to their greatest name, Orazio." We regret

that our limits prevent further quotation from Mr. Robinson's valuable remarks.

It is a matter of uncertainty whether Guido Fontana and Guido Durantino were the same person or rival maestri; and we are disposed to the former opinion, from the fact that in the documents quoted by Pungileoni no other "Vasaio" named Guido, and of Castel Durante, is named. The pieces inscribed as having been made in their botege although painted by different hands may, by the wording of their inscriptions afford some explanation; thus, on the Sta. Cecilia plate painted by Nicola, he

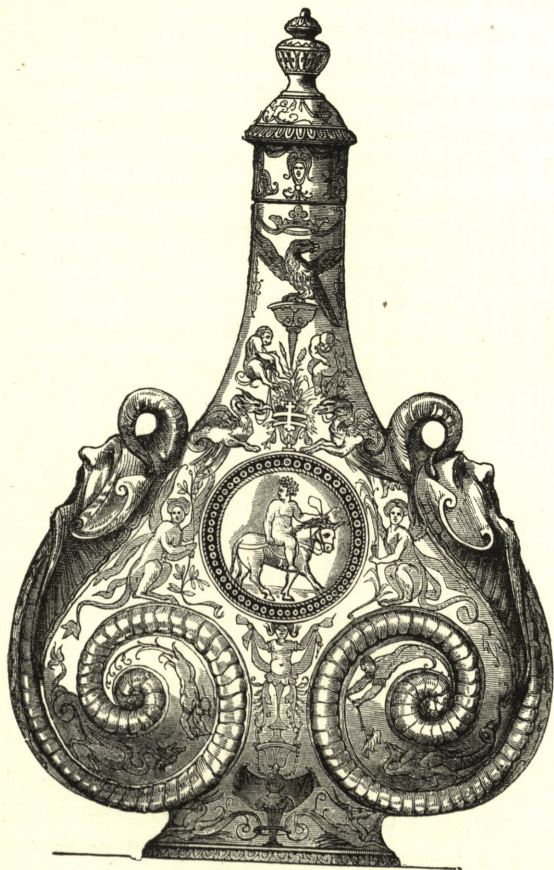
Historia de Sancta Cecilia la gnalle
 e fata in botega de Guido da castello durante
 In Urbino 1528



writes in 1528, "*fata in botega di Guido da Castello d'Urante in Urbino*," from which we argue a connexion with the Fontana.

Unfortunately, we know no piece signed as actually painted by the hand of Guido Fontana, but as he took that cognomen after settling in Urbino it would be more probable that he would himself apply it on his own work; whereas Nicola (presumably his father), on a piece of earlier date, retained the name of their

native *castello*. By others the bottega would long be known as that of the "durantini," and that it retained that appellation



even in the following generation is proved by the occasional reference to Orazio Fontana as of Castel Durante. We give a woodcut of an example of the highest quality ; a pilgrim's bottle, at South Kensington, no. 8408.

The manner of the painter of these pieces approaches very

much to that of Orazio but is less refined and rich in colouring, wanting that harmony and power of expression for which he was remarkable ; the drawing is more correct and careful than on some of Orazio's work, but is more dry and on the surface ; there is great force and movement in the figures and the landscape backgrounds are finished with much care and effect, sometimes covering the whole piece ; the foliage of the trees is also well rendered.

The celebrated vases made for the *spezieria* of the duke were produced at the Fontana fabrique, and subsequently presented to the Santa Casa at Loreto where many of them are still preserved. Those shown to the writer on his visit to that celebrated shrine some few years since did not strike him as being of such extraordinary beauty and great artistic excellence, as the high-flown eulogy bestowed upon them by some writers would have led him to expect. The majority of the pieces are drug pots of a not unusual form, but all or nearly all of them are "*istoriati*," instead of being, as is generally the case, simply decorated with "*trofei*," "*foglie*," "*grotesche*," the more usual and less costly ornamentation. Some of the pieces have serpent handles, mask spouts, &c. but he vainly looked for the magnificent vases of unsurpassed beauty, nor indeed did he see anything equal to the shaped pieces preserved in the Bargello at Florence. The work of the well-known hands of the Fontana fabrique is clearly recognisable, and several pieces are probably by Orazio. Some, more important, preserved in a low press were finer examples. We have said that the pieces individually are not so striking but taken as a whole it is a very remarkable service, said to have originally numbered 380 vases, all painted with subjects after the designs of Battista Franco, Giulio Romano, Angelo, and Raffaello ; and as the work of one private artistic pottery in the comparatively remote capital of a small duchy, it bears no slight testimony to the extraordinary development of every branch of art-industry in the various districts of Italy during the sixteenth century. They

were made by order of Guidobaldo II., but on the accession of Francesco Maria II. in 1574 he found the financial condition of the duchy in a state so embarrassed that he was obliged to devote less attention to the encouragement of art. He abdicated in favour of the Holy See and died in 1631. The vases of the Spezieria were presented to our Lady of Loreto, while his valuable art collections were removed to Florence.

On the vases of Loreto, says Mr. Marryat, "the subjects are the four evangelists, the twelve apostles, St. John, St. Paul, Susannah and Job. The others represent incidents in the Old Testament, actions of the Romans, their naval battles and the metamorphoses of Ovid. On eighty-five of the vases are portrayed the games of children, each differing from the other. These vases are highly prized for their beauty as well as for their variety. They have been engraved by Bartoli. A Grand Duke of Florence was so desirous of purchasing them, that he proposed giving in exchange a like number of silver vessels of equal weight ; while Christina of Sweden was known to say, that of all the treasures of the Santa Casa she esteemed these the most. Louis XIV. is reported to have offered for the four evangelists and St. Paul an equal number of gold statues."

With his other art treasures the ornamental vases and vessels of the *credenza*, among which were doubtless some of the choicest productions of the Urbino furnaces made for Guidobaldo, must have been in great part removed to Florence ; and there accordingly we find some remarkable specimens. For many years neglected, these noble pieces were placed almost out of observation on the top of cases which contained the Etruscan and other antique vases in the gallery of the Uffizi. When more general interest was excited on the subject of the renaissance pottery these examples were removed to another room. They now occupy central cases in one of the rooms of the Bargello, used as a museum of art objects, and form a magnificent assemblage of vases, ewers, vasques, pilgrim's bottles, and other shaped pieces,

dishes, and salvers, perhaps the richest that has descended collectively to our days, and among which may be recognised the works of all the more important ceramic artists of Urbino.

Portions of a magnificent service of the best period of Orazio Fontana's bottega are dispersed in various collections, as also some pieces of equally rich quality made after the same models, but which were probably of another "credenza." Two of the former were exhibited at the loan exhibition in 1862, by baron Anthony de Rothschild. They are large oval dishes with raised medallion centres, and having the surface, both internally and outside, divided into panels by raised strapwork springing from masks, with ornamental moulded borders, &c. These panels, edged with cartouche ornament, are painted with subjects from the Spanish romance of Amadis de Gaul, and on the reverse are inscriptions in that language corresponding with the panel illustrations. The central subject is not of the same series, but represents boys shooting at a target, on one dish, and warriors fighting, upon the other. The border is painted with admirable Urbino grotesques on a brilliant white ground. The size of these pieces is 2ft. 2 in. by 1.8½ in.

It appears that the Fontana bottega was neither founded nor maintained although greatly encouraged and patronised by the duke Guidobaldo, but was solely created by the enterprise and sustained by the united industry of the family. Orazio died on the 3rd August 1571. By his will he left his wife 400 scudi, &c. and power to remain in partnership with his nephew Flaminio, with a view to the benefit of his only daughter, Virginia, who had married into the Giunta family when young. We think there is every probability that the fabrique was so continued, and that a numerous class, having the character of the wares of the bottega but of inferior artistic merit and showing the general decadence of the period, may with probability be attributed to it.

On many of the grand pieces of the Fontana fabrique the work of another hand is seen, which differs from the acknowledged

manner of Orazio. They are among the most decorative productions of the factory, large round dishes with grotesque borders on a white ground; shaped pieces similarly decorated, and having panels of subject executed by the artist in question; others also where the subject covers the whole surface of the dish. We have no clue to the name of this able painter, but we would venture to suggest the great probability that these were the work of Camillo, who is said to have been an artist only inferior in merit to Orazio himself. In manner they approach nearly to, and are difficult to distinguish from, the finer examples of the Lanfranchi fabrique at Pesaro; less powerful and broad than the work of Orazio, and less careful in drawing than those ascribed to Guido, they approach the former in the blending of the colours and rich soft effect of surface, while a similar mode of rendering various objects, as stones, water, trees, &c. pervades all three, with slight individual variations. A peculiar elongation of the figures, and narrowing of the knee and ankle joints are characteristics of this hand, as also a transparent golden hue to the flesh.

We are almost wholly in the dark as to the clever painters of the grotesques on a pure white ground which so charmingly decorate many of the noblest productions of Orazio's furnace. The work of two or more hands is manifest on various pieces of the best period; one, perhaps the most able, is constantly seen on pieces, the istoriati panels or interiors of which are painted by Orazio himself or by the artist whose works we have just considered, and may, perhaps, also have been by the hand of the latter, a similar method of heightening with small strokes of red colour being observable on both. Gironimo, by whom we have a signed piece in the South Kensington museum, no. 4354, may have been another, but his manner is of a somewhat later character.

Of Nicola, jun., we know nothing; he is mentioned in his father's wills made in 1570 and 1576; and that he was unfortunate or improvident would seem probable from the fact that in

the deed of contract between Orazio and his father on the occasion of his setting up for himself in 1565 he agrees to keep and provide for Domitilla and Flaminio, children of his brother Nicola, for the space of three years.

Flaminio the nephew, son of Nicola, continued the works and was a favourite of the dukes Guidobaldo and Francesco Maria ; it is said that the latter took him to Florence to teach and aid pupils studying under Bartolomeo degli Ammanati, where he remained for some years. Under the fabrique of Caffaggiolo we find pieces which may perhaps have been produced under the influence of this member of the family. In form and decoration with grotesques they are a poor reminiscence of the superior works of an earlier period.

The work of another, a later and inferior hand, probably of the Fontana fabrique, is abundant in collections ; his manner is between that of the Fontana and of the Patanazzi ; free and effective, but loose and careless ; the Fontana pigments are used, and occasionally pieces occur painted with greater pains. Many vases with serpent handles and other shaped pieces were painted by this hand, of whose name we have no record, and it would be only guessing to suggest that Guido Fontana, junior, the son of Camillo, who died in 1605, may have been their author.

Another important artist of the Urbino fabrique was FRANCESCO XANTO, who, like Giorgio, adopted the unusual habit of signing in various forms the greater number of the pieces which he painted. Although we cannot but appreciate the modesty, the "Lamp of Sacrifice," which induced so many of the earlier and contemporary artists of the highest excellence to refrain from attaching their names to the works of their hands, or at the most to sign a few of their admirable productions in monogram, we must regret their having used so much reserve, and that in consequence conjecture must take so large a place in the history of this branch of artistic handicraft.

We have little other information of this painter beyond what is conveyed by the inscriptions on pieces by his hand.

His name is mentioned by Rog. Vincenzo Vanni, on the 29th March 1539, as "Franciscus Xatis fictilinus vasorum pictor egregius." A native of Rovigo, he seems to have settled at Urbino and there produced all his works. His true name, gathered from his varied signatures, would appear to be Francesco Xanto Avelli da Rovigo, and the dates of his signed works extend from 1530 to 1542, although it is highly probable that many existing undated pieces were executed before, and perhaps after those dates. His earlier works are generally more fully signed, while many of the latter have only one or two initial letters. Works by Xanto are to be found in almost every collection of any note, and among them are examples of high artistic excellence, although very many betray want of care and hasty execution. It appears that many of his pieces were subsequently enriched with the golden and ruby lustre colour at the bottega of M^o Giorgio, and M^o N at Gubbio; and, indeed, it was mainly by the observation of these, so distinctly painted and signed by Xanto at Urbino, and to which the metallic *reflet* had been added evidently by a subsequent process, that it was inferred that the lustre was a special enrichment applied at another fabrique to works painted elsewhere. Of Xanto's style and merits as an artist Mr. Robinson writes :

"Xanto's works may be considered to represent perfectly the 'Majoliche istoriate,' and he certainly had a talent for the arrangement of his works in composition, nearly all his subjects being 'pasticci'; the various figures or groups introduced being the invention of other artists copied with adroit variations over and over again, and made to do duty in the most widely different characters. As an original artist, if indeed he can be so considered, he may be classed with the more mannered of the scholars of Raffaello. His designs are generally from classical or mythological subjects. Xanto's execution, although dexterous, is

monotonous and mechanical ; his scale of colouring is crude and positive, full of violent oppositions ; the only merit, if merit it be, being that of a certain force and brightness of aspect ; in every other respect his colouring is commonplace, not to say disagreeable even ; blue, crude opaque yellow, and orange tints, and bright verdigris green are the dominant hues, and are scattered over the pieces in full unbroken masses, the yellow especially meeting the eye at the first glance. In the unsigned pieces, before 1531, the glaze is better and more transparent, the execution more delicate, and the outline more hard and black than in the later specimens. Some of Xanto's wares are profusely enriched with metallic lustres, including the beautiful ruby tint ; these specimens, however, form but a small percentage of the entire number of his works extant. This class of piece is, moreover, interesting from the fact that the iridescent colours were obviously not of Xanto's own production, but that on the contrary, they were applied to his wares by M^o Giorgio, and the supposed continuers of Giorgio's 'fabrique' in Gubbio. Many pieces are extant, which, in addition to Xanto's own signature, nearly always written in dark blue or olive tint, are likewise signed with the monogram N of the Giorgio school in the lustre tint ; and one specimen at least has been observed which, though painted by Xanto, has been signed in the lustre tint by Maestro Giorgio himself."

We cannot entirely agree with this somewhat severe judgment upon his artistic merits.

We have no evidence to confirm Passeri's supposition that BATTISTA FRANCO painted pieces and initialled them with the letters B. F. V. F. That artist was called to Urbino in 1540, by Guidobaldo II., to make designs for various pieces, and these initials are on some of the vases in the Spezieria at Loreto. He returned to Venice where he died in 1561 ; one of his cartoons for a plate is in the British museum, and others are preserved.

Of FRANCESCO DURANTINO, of Urbino, we know nothing more

than his signed works, and one of these gives rise to the question whether he ought to be ranked among the potters of Urbino, or as having a small establishment of his own at Bagnolo, or Bagnara, near Perugia. A plate in the British museum representing the meeting of Coriolanus and his mother is signed "francesco durantino 1544," as in the woodcut.

francesco durantino

1544

A yellow tone of flesh, flowing drapery, animals (particularly horses) drawn with great vigour of action, a fine and delicate outline, with careful execution but occasional weakness of effect and a peculiar softness on some of the smaller and more distant figures, are characteristic of this artist's style: the landscapes are executed with care and good effect. An example in the British museum has, however, all the richness of colour and force of the works of the Fontana.

GUIDO MERLINGO or MERLINI or NERGLINO seems to have been a proprietor of a bottega in Urbino, although his name does not occur as the actual painter.

In the Brunswick museum a dish representing Mark Antony is signed, "fate in bottega di Guido de Nerglino." In the Louvre is a plate, subject Judith and Holophernes, signed at the back, "ne 1551 fato in Botega de Guido Merlino."

CÆSARE DA FAENZA worked in his fabrique about 1536, as proved by an agreement dated 1st January in that year, in which he is styled "Cæsare Care Cariii Faventinus."

Among other recorded names are those of—

Federigo di Giannantonio,
Nicolo di Gabriele,
Gian Maria Mariana, } who worked about 1530.

Simone di Antonio Mariani, about 1542.

Rafaelle Ciarla,

Luca del fu Bartolomeo, about 1544, and

Guy, from Castel Durante.

FRANCESCO SILVANO had a botega in Urbino, at which Xanto worked in 1541, as proved by the signature on a plate representing the storming of Goleta.

GEORGIO PICCHI or PICCI the younger, of the Durantine family, painted at Urbino. Pieces signed by him are extant. Borders of Cupids among clouds or covering the surface is a favourite decoration.

In the decline of the Urbino potteries must be placed the productions of the members of the PATANATI or PATANAZZI family. They do not appear to have succeeded to any of the former eminent artists as masters of a fabrique, but painted at the establishment of Joseph Batista Boccione, as we are informed by a signed example. Passeri only mentions them as being of a noble family and as finding their names inscribed on specimens which he instances. One of these is at South Kensington; a large dish, no. 2612, signed ALF . P . F . VRBINI . 1606. The young *Vincenzio* is the last whose name occurs. Passeri cites a piece by him, "Vincenzio Patanazzi da Urbino di eta d'anni tredici, 1620."

Another piece by this youthful phenomenon is in the collection of monsignore Cajani at Rome, representing the expulsion from paradise. It is a most inferior production and not meritorious even for so young an artist.

With the exception of some large dishes and a few others the wares of Urbino, as a rule, are not ornamented on the reverse. The more usual pieces are edged with a yellow line which is

repeated round the foot or central hollow, in the middle of which the titular inscription or date is written in manganese black, dark olive, or blue colour. The paste is sometimes of a pink hue, produced by the colour of the clay shining through the glaze, but in other cases of a purer white. In the "sopra bianco" grotesques the ground is rendered unusually white by an additional surface of *terra di Vicenza* or *bianco di Ferrara*; the glaze is of fine quality and even surface. It may be here noticed that the wares known of the Lanfranco fabrique at Pesaro have similar characteristics, and it is not possible to distinguish between them. That wares of a better class were occasionally produced at Urbino during the last century is proved by a lamp in the South Kensington collection, no. 6856; made, as the inscription tells us, at the *Fabrica di Majolica fina*, which seems to have been established or conducted in that city in 1773 by a French artist named Rolet. We hear of him previously at Borgo San Sepolcro in 1771, but all further record of his productions or his success is unknown.

We are not aware that Urbino at present produces any artistic pottery.

CHAPTER XIV.

BORGIO SAN-SEPOLCRO, DIRUTA, &c.

THERE is an example of the BORGIO SAN-SEPOLCRO ware at South Kensington, a lamp, formed of faience of a bluish white shade, painted with garlands of flowers, &c. in colour, on which is written under the foot, "Citta Borgio S. Sepolcro a 6 Febraio 1771. Mart. Roletus fecit."

At SAN QUIRICO cardinal Chigi established a work about 1714, inspired with the idea of reviving the art of painting on faience. It was directed by Piezzentili, a painter who had given some study to the celebrated vases by Orazio Fontana. On his death Bartolomeo Terchi, Feschi, or Ferchi, seems to have worked at or directed the establishment, for in the Louvre is a plaque representing Moses striking the rock, and signed "*Bar Terchi Romano in S. Quirico.*" We shall meet with this wandering artist also at Bassano. With other members of his family he seems to have worked at various potteries throughout Italy, and examples occur on which his or their signatures appear, accompanied only by the patronymic "*Romano,*" and which are of course difficult to assign to any one of the fabriques at which we know them to have worked.

Ferdinando Maria Campani before going to Siena worked also at this fabrique; its productions were not sold, but given as presents by the cardinal.

We have very little positive information in respect to the fabrique of DIRUTA in the Papal States. Alluded to by Passeri

as a pottery near Foligno where pieces were produced remarkable for the whiteness of the paste, we are led to the supposition that he may have confounded the wares produced at other neighbouring localities with those made at Diruta: and he does not inform us whether it produced lustred wares or only those of polychrome decoration. A few years since certain plates came under the notice of collectors inscribed "In Deruta," the subjects painted in blue outline, and lustred with a brassy golden colour. Doubt and uncertainty had long existed as to the spot where the large "bacili" and other pieces of a well-known and abundant ware, lustred with a golden pigment of peculiarly pearly effect in certain lights, had been produced, and the discovery of these signed examples, having a somewhat similar metallic enrichment, caused connoisseurs to grasp at the, perhaps hasty, conclusion, that to Diruta must be assigned those wares of earlier date and hitherto unknown locality, and that Diruta must have possessed a pottery of very early time and important character. But after an examination and comparison of signed specimens, and others which are with reasonable probability considered to be of this *fabrique*, we are compelled to conclude that the productions of Diruta were generally inferior to, and in many instances copied or derived from, those of the Gubbio or earlier Pesaro types.

Castel di Diruta or Deruta is a "borgo" or dependency of Perugia, on the road from that city to Orvieto by Todi. It is but a few miles from Perugia, within an easy day's journey of Gubbio, and although it may be reasonable to presume that potteries existed there from an early period, we think it more probable that they derived the use of the lustre pigments from Gubbio.

It is extremely difficult in many instances to decide with any degree of certainty as to whether some individual early specimens of the lustred ware alluded to above, be of Pesaro, of Gubbio, or of Diruta workmanship. We have little hesitation in assigning the dish in the next woodcut to Diruta; the dance of Cupids is after

Marc Antonio. The similarity of the process necessary to such productions entails a corresponding similarity of result, but we notice a somewhat coarser grounding, a golden *reflet* of a brassy character, a ruby, when it (rarely) occurs, of pale dull quality,



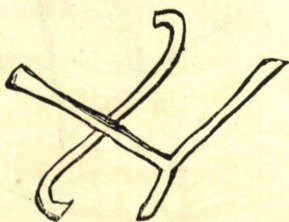
looser outlines of a colder and heavier blue, and in the pieces not lusted the same tones of colour, a dark blue approaching to that of Caffaggiolo in depth but wanting its brilliancy, the use of a bright yellow to heighten the figures in grotesques, &c. in imitation of the golden lustre, and a thin green. The drawing is generally of an inferior stamp, and a certain *toft ensemble* per-

vades the pieces difficult to define but which more or less prevails.

The discovery within the last few years of a fine work, signed with the artist's monogram, the date 1527, and the place at which

fabriano

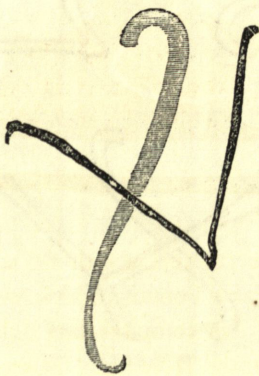
1527



it was painted, is all we know of the existence of a bottega at FABRIANO. There can be little doubt that many such local and individual furnaces existed during the sixteenth century under the direction of ceramic artists, in many instances an emigrant from one of the more important centres, and encouraged to set up for himself at another city by the patronage of the lead-

ing families. This plate, which has for subject the "Madonna della Scala" after Marc Antonio's engraving from Raffaello, is cleverly painted, and on the reverse is the inscription of which we have given a facsimile. It was exhibited by M. Spitzer, of Paris, at the "Exposition Universelle," was purchased from him by signor Alf^o. Castellani, and subsequently sold at Christie's for £114. Another example by the same hand, and with the same subject but without signature, was sold at the same sale.

In the museum of Economic geology is a plate of the same bottega, having for subject the rape of Proserpine surrounding a cupid centre. It is painted in *grisaille*, the sky warmed with touches of yellow, and ably executed. This fabrique not being then known it was ascribed to Urbino, but the monogram on the reverse, exactly corresponding with that on the signed Fabriano piece, proves it to be of the same origin. We also give this mark in fac-simile.



The pottery of VITERBO is not recorded by any writer, but an inferior work at South Kensington is inscribed with the name of the city and with that of Diomeo, who was perhaps the painter of the piece in 1544. It is a rough piece, rudely coloured and ill-drawn, but interesting from the name of place and the date.

We give an engraving of a portion of the border, the hand of a youth holding a scroll. Two other examples are with some doubt referred to the same locality.



LORETO is named in connexion with the set of Speziera vases, of the fabrique of Orazio Fontana, which were presented to the shrine of our Lady of Loreto by the last duke of Urbino, on his abdication in favour of the Holy See. It was the habit to collect the dust gathered from the walls of the Santa Casa and the dress of the Virgin, from which, mixed in small quantities with the potter's clay, cups or bowls were formed and painted with figures of the Virgin and Child, generally on a yellow ground. These cups were inscribed outside CON · POL · DI · S · CASA (with the dust of the Holy House). Occasionally, but less frequently,

some of the holy water from the shrine was sprinkled on the dust, thereby to impart a still greater sanctity. A cup so made is in the writer's collection, and is inscribed CON · POL · ET · AQVA · DI · S · CASA (with dust and water of the Holy House). These cups were probably presented as marks of favour to pilgrims who had visited and probably enriched the sanctuary. Signor Raffaelli believes that they were made at Castel Durante, for the establishment at Loreto. The seal of the convent was affixed to them in red wax.

Hitherto we have no published record of the former existence of a manufactory of artistic enamelled pottery at ROME, that great centre to which by her affluence and power at various periods of history artists and objects of art have been drawn from their native countries. We have no assurance that purely native Roman art ever attained to any very high degree of excellence. The Etruscans and the Greeks in Pagan times, the Byzantine school of the middle ages, and at the period of the *renaissance* the great Tuscan and Venetian artists worked in Rome upon those monuments of genius of which she is so justly proud; but they are possessions rather than native productions; and it would appear that even in so comparatively small a branch of artistic manufacture she was indebted to a native of Castel Durante for the establishment of a fabrique of maiolica. Had there been pre-existing furnaces, producing wares of artistic merit, it would hardly have been worth while for M^o Diomede on the fall of the dukedom of Urbino to bring his art to Rome. There is no notice of any pieces of this ware inscribed as having been made at Rome until the year 1600, when we find on two oviform pharmacy vases of good outline, having each a pair of double serpent handles and a domed cover surmounted by a knob, the following inscriptions written on oval labels. On one vase "Fatto in botega de M. Diomede Durante in Roma," and on the other, of which we give a woodcut, "Fatto in Roma da Gio. Pavlo Savino M.D.C." These vases are decorated on one side

with grotesques ably sketched in yellow, greyish blue, and orange colours on a white enamel ground of considerable purity ; on the other, a leafage diaper in the same tone of blue covers the like ground. On one only, immediately above the inscribed oval, the head of a buffalo is painted in dark blue, approaching to black, and may refer to the locality of the bottega, possibly in the vicinity



of the Via or Palazzo del Bufalo. These vases were for many years in the possession of the Gaetani family, and were purchased by the writer during his sojourn at Rome in the early part of 1870. The style of execution is in the manner of the Urbino grotesque decoration of the Fontana fabrique, but has not that delicacy, combined with artistic freedom and naïveté, so remarkable in the productions attributed to Camillo Fontana and other contemporary artists working some fifty years before ; in certain respects they have affinity to the work of M. Gironimo of Urbino. Numerous examples of similar general character, but later in date and of inferior execution, are frequently to be met with in the shops at Rome and prove the production to have been abundant ; specimens are in the South Kensington museum.

A manufacture of white glazed earthenware, as also of "biscuit" porcelain, was introduced by the famous engraver

Giovanni Volpato, of Venice, in the year 1790. He expended a large sum of money in making experiments and in the founding of the works, as also in procuring numerous models which were executed with the greatest care from the antique, and from other objects in museums, &c. as also from the works of Canova. At one time no less than twenty experienced artists were employed in modelling the "biscuit" porcelain to supply the great demand. Large furnaces were constructed, but the great expense and risk in the production of pieces for table use necessitated their sale at a price which could not compete with the French wares, although superior in the qualities of strength and resistance. The establishment continued until about 1832, when the works ceased.

The figures and groups in "biscuit" porcelain, of pure white and stone colour (variations arising from the different degrees of heat to which they were exposed in the oven) were undoubtedly the more important artistic productions of the Roman fabrique; but glazed pottery, very similar in character to that of Leeds or the "Queen's ware" of the Wedgwoods and known as "terraglia verniciata," was also made, and in this material statuettes, figures of animals, candelabra, vases, and portrait busts were modelled. There can be little doubt that the finer examples were produced at the period when the elder Volpato perfected the establishment, and when his critical and artistic eye directed his modellers, and many of the figures and groups are admirable for their grace and careful execution. Few bear any mark, but occasionally pieces, both of the "biscuit" and glazed ware, bear the name G · VOLPATA · ROMA · impressed in the clay.

A manufacture of coarse glazed pottery rudely ornamented with figures, flowers, fruit, &c. in colour, still exists in the Trastevere, which supplies the *contadini* and the humbler classes of the city with pots and pans of various form and startling decoration.

CHAPTER XV.

FAENZA.

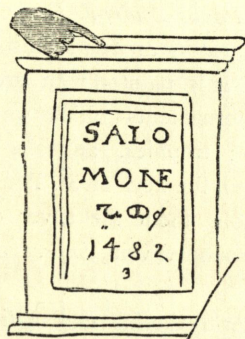
That long and rather monotonous old post road the Via Æmilia (now run sidelong by the rail) which forms almost a straight line from Piacenza to Ancona, through one of the richest countries in the world, after passing the fine cities of Parma, Reggio, Modena, and Bologna, reaches Faenza and Forlì, important and early centres of the potter's art.

Faenza is a small dull town on the site of the Roman *Faventia*, and of the antiquity of the ceramic industry at this site there can be no doubt, although perhaps Pesaro, Caffaggiolo, and Castel Durante may have nearly equal claims in that respect. Of its extent and importance there is equal certainty, and there is moreover great reason to believe that the French word *faïence* applied to this class of pottery was derived from the name of the place; although there is another claimant in the small town, under the Estrelle mountains, a short way from Cannes and Grasse, called by the very name, Faïance (*Faventia*), and now *chef-lieu* of a canton in Draguignan of the Var. Mezerai, in his *Grande Histoire*, tells us that this place was chiefly renowned for its *Vaisselles de terre*, and there would seem to be good evidence of the existence of its potteries from a very early period to the present day; but of what degree of artistic merit we are unable to decide; neither can we feel assured that the name, as applied to enamelled earthenware, was derived from the French town and not from the Italian city. In Mr. Marryat's history of

pottery and porcelain is an interesting notice on this subject, from which we quote a few words. "Faïence, Fayence, or Fayance, is the old French term, under which were comprised all descriptions of glazed earthenware, even inclusive of porcelain, and, to a certain extent, continues so, corresponding in its general use to the English word crockery. The name is commonly supposed to be derived from Faenza; but it may well be doubted whether upon any authority much to be relied upon, since neither historians nor topographers seem to have considered the matter worthy of their attention or examination. It might be useful to trace the origin of a name so frequently given by the Romans to their settlements. Besides Faenza there was a district in their colony of Barcinum (now Barcelona), and another in Andalusia, which is supposed to have been situated somewhere between Alcalá, Real, and Antequera. The old word Fayence, from the Latin 'fagus,' a beech tree, has become almost obsolete in France. In Geneva, however, to the present day, beechwood is still sold in the timber markets as 'de la fayence.'"

The fabrique of Faenza has been a kind of refuge, among amateurs, for pieces destitute of sufficient outward sign to mark them as of other localities; and every gaunt and early piece, strong in blue and yellow colour, has been set down as Faentine. We agree with MM. Jacquemart and Darcel in the belief that many works of Caffaggiolo have been classed as of Faenza. We are, however, not convinced that the plaque in the hôtel Cluny, the piece bearing the most ancient date hitherto discovered (if we except that at Sèvres, inscribed xxxxiixiiii, and supposed to read 1448), inscribed in early characters around the sacred monogram, "NICOLAUS DE RAGNOLIS AD HONOREM DEI ET SANCTI MICHAELIS FECIT FIERI ANO 1475" is rightly attributed to Caffaggiolo instead of to Faenza. Another plaque in the Sèvres collection is dated 1477, with the name and arms of NICOLAUS · ORSINI. We next arrive at the exquisite service, of which seventeen pieces are preserved in the Correr

museum at Venice, one in the writer's (from Pourtalès), and one in the South Kensington collection; we give a woodcut of the mark, with the date 1482.



The first published matter bearing upon the wares of Faenza is the passage by Garzoni in the *Piazza Universale*, a publication of 1485, in which he speaks of the pottery of this place as excellent for its whiteness, &c. *che fa le majoliche così bianche e polite*, a remark borne out by the quality of the service just referred to. In the church of St. Petronio at Bologna is a pavement of tiles covering the ground of the chapel of St. Sebastian, and without doubt laid down at the expense of Donato Vaselli, a canon of that Basilica, who about 1487 decorated that chapel at his own cost. The date upon one of these tiles is 1487, and upon others are inscriptions, in parts unfortunately imperfect from the injury or misplacement of some of the squares, but which as put together by signor Frati of that city, would read BOLOQNIESVS · BETINI · FECIT : while upon other tiles occur :—

. C . . ELIA · BE
F . . . TICIE

. ZETILA · BE
. FAVETCIE

XABETA · BE
FAVENTCIE

and again upon another a small label inscribed PETRVS · ANDRE · DEFAVE. Whatever doubt may attach to the Faentine origin of the plaque in the hôtel Cluny, dated 1475, there can be none in respect to the pavement of San Petronio : the fact of the name *Petrus Andre-de-Fave* occurring, independent of the others, upon a *piccolo cartello* seems to us an indisputable proof to that effect. It is painted with great skill, in a style of colouring and with ornaments which we are accustomed to attribute to Faenza ; trophies, animals, heads, the arms of Bologna and her motto, the keys of St. Peter, and various devices are represented ; among them the silver case of lancets on a green field, and the wounded vein, *imprese* of the Manfredi family of Faenza.

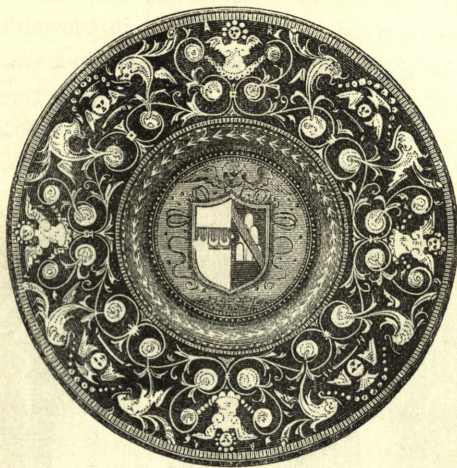
Referring the reader to the full explanation given in the introduction to the large catalogue of Maiolica, we can give here only a few brief remarks upon the wares attributed to Faenza under the following heads :—

- A. The produce of the Casa Pirota.
- B. By Baldasara Manara.
- C. Pieces by the painter of the Correr service, and of his botega.
- D. By other artists presumably of Faenza.
- E. Wares of the last century and modern.

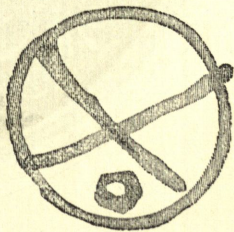
A. One of the most important if not the leading establishment at Faenza was known under the name of the Casa Pirota, and probably existed from an early period, but when and by whom founded, and the name of its maestro, we have yet to learn. A house on the north side of the principal street (where a pottery was working some few years since, at which we have seen well-executed reproductions of the old wares) was stated by the proprietors to be on the site of that ancient botega, but whether there is sufficient foundation for this statement we are unable to say.

The greater part or nearly all the pieces known to us as being

marked with the crossed circle, signed with the name of the house, or executed by the same hands as such pieces, are of a marked character of decoration; the wide borders are generally



ornamented with grotesques, reserved in white and shaded with a brownish yellow; or reserved in a paler greyish tone heightened with white, on a dark blue ground. *A berettino* and *sopra azzuro* are the terms applied to this mode of decoration, and among examples of the former and perhaps earlier of the styles, are works of the highest quality of enamelled pottery and of admirable decoration and artistic painting. The woodcut is from a good plate of about 1520; at South Kensington, no. 1734: and we give also a copy of the mark on the reverse.



The work of at least three painters is discernible upon the wares of this establishment. First and foremost are those charming pieces of the greatest technical excellence by the

painter of the shallow bowl at South Kensington, no. 354, which is marked at the back with the crossed circle, having a pellet in one of the quarters, and has for subject, Mutius Scaevola. By him are other pieces similarly shaped and decorated with borders of grotesques reserved in white, shaded in brownish yellow on the blue ground, and central subjects painted in a similar tone.



We next have the author of the fine plateau, no. 7158, and of the better examples of those abundant pieces having central subjects painted in a greenish yellow tone on the *berettino*, or coats of arms emblazoned, and wide borders covered with grotesques in a lighter tone heightened with white on the dark blue ground. This artist also ventured into bolder subjects upon

plaques of considerable size, two of which, one representing the Adoration of the Magi, are in the British museum; over a portico which forms a background to the composition, the crossed circle and pellet, mark of the fabrique, and the date 1527 are inscribed, while on the reverse is a yellow roundel between the letters B. B. F. F. and the same date. Rather earlier, is the plate (in the woodcut p. 168) which although by some attributed to Caffaggiolo, is probably of Faenza. The richly decorated back leads to this conclusion.

Not to be confounded with these masters, the last of whom by way of distinction is known among amateurs as the "green man," are works by a more able artist who painted in colours of the richest tone with admirable disposition and vigorous design, and who also signed with the same initials. The finely treated subject of the Gathering of the Manna, on the plate no. 7680, is by this hand, whose works are neither ornamented at the back, nor signed with the mark of the fabrique.

Baldasara

manara

fa

B. The first notice we have of Baldasara Manara occurs in Zani's "Enciclopedia Metodica," in which work, under the name of *Mannara*, he refers to the signature of the artist upon a *sotto*

coppa with the accompanying mark. This tazza, now in the possession of the writer, is perhaps the most important signed example known, and represents the triumph of Time; it is one of a service decorated with orange scale-work on the yellow ground of the reverse, and of which other pieces still exist.

C. Wanting the inscribed name of the locality at which they were painted, we are quite prepared to acquiesce in the maturely considered opinion of signor Lazari, that the beautiful service, 17 pieces of which are in the Museo Correr at Venice, and other works painted by the same admirable early artist were produced at Faenza. They perfectly agree with the qualities lauded by Garzoni at the approximate period of their production, one of them being dated 1482; and no wares of that period could in their qualities of enamel be more worthy of the expression *bianche polite* than the pieces of this service. We have no clue to the name of the painter. That they were the production of a bottega distinct from the Casa Pirotta seems assured, from their dissimilarity in technical quality and style of ornamentation to the wares of that productive house, and the absence of its distinctive mark; but there is great similarity in their glaze and other details to the pieces painted by another excellent hand who signs with the letters F. R.

F. R.

D. A multitude of homeless casuals have been attributed to the workshops of Faenza, from technical characteristics and manner of decoration, while as many more of somewhat different complexion have been promiscuously charged upon Urbino. Our ignorance of the exact localities of their production from want of evidence leads to this doubtful generalization, and until the discovery of signed specimens by the same hands, or documental record, we must still in numerous cases rest content with our assumption.

Many early pieces, modelled in high relief and in the round, are probably of this origin. The very fine tazza, represented in the woodcut, is a good example. They differ from parallel pieces ascribed to Caffaggiolo in a certain rigidity of modelling, the use of a shading and outline of a darker or more indigo-like blue, and a free application of yellow and orange pigments; a more gothic sentiment also prevails from the influence of the German school,



and we find subjects copied or derived from the works of Dürer, Martin Schon, &c., more frequently upon the higher class of Faentine wares than on those of painters working at the more southern centres of the art. The contemporary pieces of Caffaggiolo are more Italian in sentiment, the blue pigment of greater brilliancy, a purple also used, and a thicker glaze of great richness and more *tendre* effect.

From an early period Faenza seems to have produced a large

number of electuary pots and pharmacy bottles ; a pair are in the hôtel Cluny, one bearing the name FAENZA, the other 1500. Many of these vases are decorated in the style known as a *quartiere*, being divided into compartments, painted in bright yellow, &c., on dark blue, with foliated and other ornament, and usually having a medallion with profile head or subject on one side, under which the name of the drug in gothic lettering is inscribed on a ribbon. A curious example is in the British museum ; a large flask-shaped bottle of dark blue ground with yellow leafage and with twisted handles, upon the medallion of which is represented a bear clasping a column, with the inscription "*et sarrimo boni amici*," allusive, in all probability, to the reconciliation of the rival houses of Orsini and Colonna in 1517.

We would here refer to the frequent occurrence on these vases, as occasionally upon other pieces, of pharmaceutical and ecclesiastical signs, letters, &c. surmounted by the archiepiscopal cross and other emblems which we believe have reference to the uses of monastic and private pharmacies for which the services were made, and not to be confounded, as has been too frequently the case, with the marks of botege or of the painters of the piece. These emblems have no other value to us than the clue which they might afford to patient investigation of the locality and brotherhood of the conventual establishment to which they may have belonged, and among the archives of which may be recorded the date and the fabrique by which they were furnished. But what are of far greater interest are those admirable early pieces, painted by ceramic artists of the first rank, who, beyond a rare monogram or date, have left no record of their place or name ; and whose highly-prized works, for their authors are several, are jealously guarded in our public and private museums. Some of these, with reasonable probability, are believed to have been executed at Faenza. Several examples are preserved, of an early character, perhaps the work of one hand, who marked them on the back with a large M crossed by a paraphe. They are usually

plateaux with raised centre, on which is a portrait head, or shallow dishes with flat border. Variations of the letter F are found on pieces, some of which are fairly ascribable to this fabrique, but we need not point out the fact that many other localities of the manufacture can claim the same for their initial letter, and that the characteristics and technical qualities of the pieces themselves are a necessary test.

Later in the sixteenth century, when subject painting covering the whole surface of the piece was in general fashion (*istoriata*), the unsigned works produced at Faenza are difficult to distinguish from those of other fabriques. Some examples exist in collections, as one in the Louvre with the subject of a cavalry skirmish and inscribed 1561 in *Faenza*, but we have no knowledge of their painters, and even the occurrence of the name of that city is but rarely met with. Her wares are usually richly ornamented on the back with imbrication, as was the manner of Manara, or with concentric lines of blue, yellow, orange.

E. Of the pottery produced at Faenza during the seventeenth and the last century we have but little record. Some pharmacy vases are mentioned by M. Jacquemart signed "Andrea Pantales Pingit, 1616," but the signature does not appear to be accompanied by the name of that city. In 1639 Francesco Vicchij was the proprietor of the most important fabrique.

A modern establishment professes to occupy the premises of the ancient Casa Pirota, where we have seen fairly good reproductions of the ordinary *sopra azzuro* plates of the old bottega, but these are but weak imitations, and the glory of Faentine ceramic art must be looked for in museums.

CHAPTER XVI.

FORLÌ, FERRARA, ETC.

THE first notice we have of the pottery of FORLÌ is merely indirect, occurring in a document referred to by Passeri and dated as early as 1396, a passage in which speaks of John Pedrinus "formerly of the potteries of Forlì and now an inhabitant of Pesaro;" thus proving that such a manufactory did exist at the former town previous to that date; but it does not inform us whether it was more than a furnace for the production of ordinary wares. Piccolpasso refers to the painted majolica of Forlì, and there can be no doubt from the examples we still possess that at the time he wrote, in the middle of the sixteenth century, it was well known as one of the important fabriques of northern Italy.

Our next evidence is more direct, and consists of a series of examples in the South Kensington museum, the careful comparison of which has led to the conclusion that the wares produced at the bottega of Maestro Jeronimo (?) at the latter end of the fifteenth and early part of the sixteenth century were of a very high order. That numbered 7410 is the finest piece with which the writer is acquainted, part of an historical service made for Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, whose arms are emblazoned on the rim. It has hitherto been a question as to which of the early manufactories the production of this service could be attributed, but we think that there can be no hesitation, after a comparison with other pieces, in classifying it as a pro-

duction of Forlì. The pretty plate no. 1803 (engraved) approaches nearer to the manner of the finer wares of Forlì than to any other fabrique with which we can connect it, and the pavement of tiles no. 30, on which occurs the date 1513, is remark-



able, as shown in the next engraving, for the portrait heads introduced, one of which is that of the celebrated Melozzo; the other may perhaps be that of the artist who executed the work, and who is unquestionably the same as the painter of the *M^o iero* plate; from an inscription of doubtful reading it may be understood that he signs this work as "Petrus," while the letter R, the initial of his patronymic, occurs with P at the side of what may be intended for his portrait.

Mr. Barker had a plate, from the Delsette collection, subject

the story of Alexander and Roxana, on which is inscribed "Leo-
chadius Solobrinus picsit forolivia mece 1555;" and in the
museum at Bologna is a basin on which is painted a repre-



sentation of the supper at which Mary Magdalene washes Jesus' feet; on the back it is signed by the same artist, with the date 1564. This is the latest signed and dated piece of the fabrique with which we are acquainted.

Potteries are said to have been established at BOLOGNA and IMOLA, and pieces have been ascribed to them. A plate is in a

French collection, well painted and of about the year 1500, which has the name of RAVENNA on the reverse.

Passing to the northern duchies of Italy we find that Alfonso I., duke of Ferrara, found means, notwithstanding his troubled and warlike rule, to establish a fabrique of Maiolica at his castle in FERRARA. Although the precise period of the introduction of the art is unknown, as early as 1436 the name of "Maestro Benedetto *bocalaro in Castello*" is recorded; in 1472 one Enrico, and in 1489 Gio. da Modena, are named; while in a *memoriale* of expenses in 1443 occurs the first mention of painted and glazed wares. A curious document in the archives of Mantua, dated 1494, tells us that Isabella (d'Este), wife of the marquis of Mantua (Gonzaga), had sent a plate which had been broken into three pieces to be repaired at Ferrara by the *Maestri* working at the castle; this was done, and the mended plate returned at the desire of the duchess of Ferrara with another as a present.

From 1506 to 1522 the artistic works seem to have been discontinued, probably on account of the wars in which the duke was engaged: and from 1534 to 1559, during the reign of Ercole II., the work does not seem to have been encouraged. Pietro-Paolo Stanghi of Faenza is the only artist recorded, having made the ornaments to a stove in the castle; but Alfonso II. took more interest in the manufacture, and Vasari speaks of the fine productions of his furnaces. Nearly half a century then passed away before we hear of fresh experiments in the production of porcelain directed by M^o. Camillo, of Urbino, assisted by his brother Battista, and which seem to have resulted in success. When injured by the accidental explosion of a cannon, which ultimately caused his death and that of three gentlemen in 1567, he kept the secret, refusing to divulge it. This event is mentioned by Bernardo Canigiani, the ambassador of the Florentine court, who speaks of Camillo da Urbino as a maker of vases, painter, and chemist, and the true modern discoverer of porcelain, "*Ritrovatore moderno alla porcellana.*" It would seem,

however, that his brother, Battista, must have known something of the process, which he may have been able to perfect by experiments, for it appears that between 1568 and 1569 the work was continued, as on the 17th December of the latter year an entry is made of an unusual allowance of wine for a workman engaged in preparing the ingredients "*per far porcellani*." The cruet or vase, here engraved, is of about this period; it is at South Kensington, no. 505.



It is greatly to be regretted that we have at present no clue by which we can, even with probability, attribute any of the examples of maiolica in our collections to the earlier works of the Faentine artists produced under Alfonso I. at Ferrara; the more so as both under his reign and under that of Alfonso II. the fabrique was conducted, not with a view to profit or commercial enterprise, but simply from princely magnificence and a love of art. The produce was for their own use, and for presents among friends, but not for sale; we may therefore conclude that it was of highly artistic and great technical excellence. This was exceptional among the potteries of that period in Italy, most of which were commercial undertakings, more or less patronized and encouraged

by the ruling families of their several localities. Some Ferrarese pieces have doubtless been preserved, and are probably now classed among those of Faenza with which they must have a great affinity.

It is not till 1579, when the art was in decline and when the Urbino style of ornamentation prevailed, that, on the occasion of the marriage of Alfonso II., it is believed that a *credenza* was made, the pieces of which are to be recognized by bearing the device of a burning pyre with the motto "*Ardet æternum.*" The pieces of this service have a distinctive character of their own, and although their connection with Ferrara may be merely one of ownership and not of origin, we think it well to class them under that head because we have no other standard to which we can attach all that is known of the history of that princely bottega, and because these pieces have, in default of positive evidence to the contrary, been accepted as Ferrarese. They are remarkable for the purity of the white enamel ground; the grotesques are by another hand than those on pieces universally believed to be of the later period of Urbino or of Pesaro, but they are not easily distinguished without examination of the specimens side by side. Two pieces are in the Louvre, two others are at South Kensington.

Alfonso II. died in 1597, after which the dukedom was absorbed into the States of the Church. The Este removed to Modena, to which place the contents of the palace at Ferrara were carried, including the old maiolica, some of which is mentioned in inventories of the seventeenth century. A few pieces which escaped destruction during the French invasion of Italy were gathered from neglected corners of the palace, and placed in the public gallery of Modena in 1859.

Although the antique pottery of MODENA is referred to by Pliny and by Livy, we have no exact record or marked example of wares produced there during the period of the renaissance. Modenese artists in terra-cotta worked at Ferrara, and Cristoforo da Modena was *boccalaro* to the duke of that territory in the

sixteenth century. Piccolpasso names Modena as a place where maiolica was produced, but whether of a superior or of a more ordinary kind we are not informed. In the last century Geminiano Cozzi, of that city, was the leading maker of porcelain at Venice about 1765, but the monopoly granted to the fabrique of Sassuolo impeded the manufacture of enamelled wares elsewhere in the duchy.

At SASSUOLO, a town prettily situated ten miles to the south of Modena, an establishment for the manufacture of enamelled earthenware was introduced by Gio. Andrea Ferrari in 1741. It would seem that he obtained from the duke Francesco III. the right of making ordinary white and painted maiolica, as the stanniferous enamelled wares were then universally denominated, to the exclusion of all rivals in the duchy and all importation from other parts, except during the fair held at Reggio. The work commenced in 1742, and in a few years he was joined by Gio. Maria Dallari. Their rights were from time to time renewed, and in 1756 confirmed to the extent of granting the monopoly to the family for three generations; the materials were not to be charged with import duty, and the advantages secured to the fabrique were further extended in 1761 by even excluding the foreign wares from the fair at Reggio; the manufacturers on their part being bound to supply the duchy with an abundance of good wares at moderate prices. These wares produced were various, among others finer pieces painted in the Japanese style and with flowers and gilding; groups of figures were also made, and a large export business carried on.

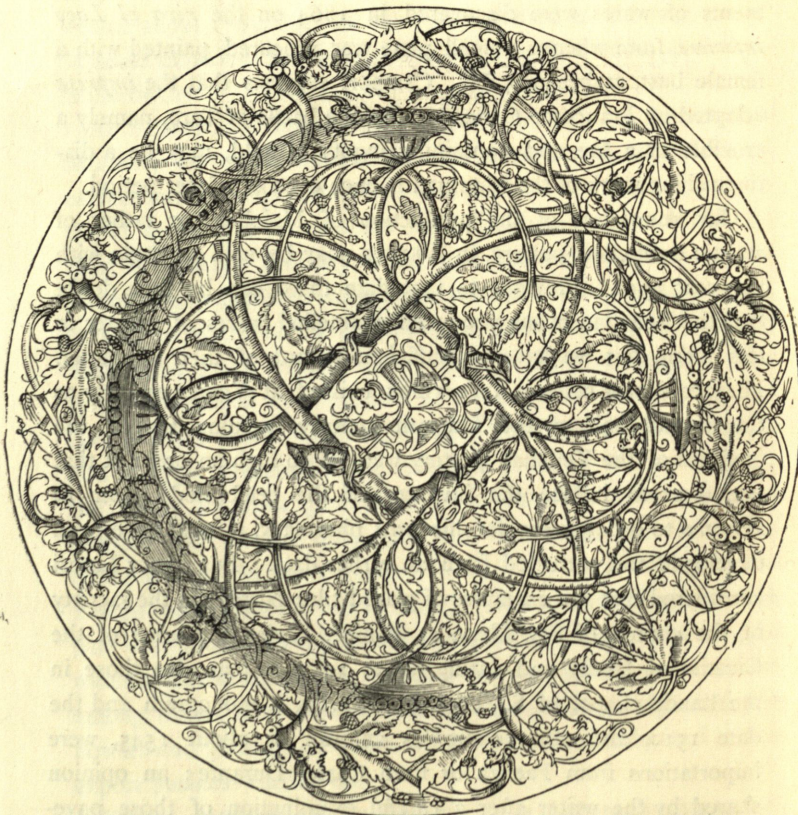
From a document in the Archivio della camera di commercio, it would appear that the art was introduced at MANTUA about 1450, and that its workers had their statutes which were altered and amended from time to time; but we are quite unable to judge of the character of the wares produced. They were presumably of an inferior quality, for we have already seen that Isabella D'Este in 1494 procured maiolica for her own use from

Ferrara, Urbino, &c., which would argue that the pottery of Mantua was inferior. In the second half of that century Schivenoglia mentions a *bottega di Maioli*, conducted by one Zonan Antonio *Majolaro*, and remains of a furnace with fragments of wares were discovered in 1864 on the *riva al Lago inferiore*, from whence a small plate was procured, painted with a female bust, arabesques, &c. Campori suggests that the *impresa* adopted by Francesco Gonzaga after the battle of Taro, namely a crucible in a fire and containing ingots of gold, may be a distinguishing mark of the Mantuan faïence even of a later period.

Our knowledge of the production of Maiolica, or rather of artistic enamelled pottery, in VENICE may be said to begin with the year 1540. Previous to that date there can be little doubt that the Venetian ovens produced enamelled wares of greater or less merit, but we have no sufficient record of their character. M. Jacquemart believes that works existed at Venice as early as the second half of the fifteenth century, arguing that if the qualities of the Venetian pottery were of so high an order at that period as to induce the inventor of the celebrated *bianco di Ferrara* to order vases for his own pharmacy, it must have been developed and perfected from an earlier date. But signor Lazari considered that the examples of glazed tiles existent in the sacristy of the church of Sta. Elena at Venice, having the arms of the Giustiniani family and dating about 1450-80; as also those in the Lando chapel of S. Sebastiano, having a monogram and the date 1510, and other examples anterior to about 1545, were importations from Faenza or from Castel Durante; an opinion shared by the writer after a careful examination of those pavements. The woodcut, however, p. 182 represents a very fine dish which we may reasonably ascribe to Venice; of about the year 1540: now at Kensington, no. 4438.

Sir William Drake quotes a petition, dated 1664, from the guild of the "Boccaleri" of Venice, in which reference is made to previous decrees in their favour issued in the years 1455, 1472,

and 1518, prohibiting the importation of foreign earthenware ; and a decree of the senate in 1665 prohibiting the importation or sale in Venice of any sort of foreign earthenware by any person



not being a member of the guild, but upon the condition that that body should keep the city well supplied with "latesini," and that shops should be kept open for its sale. From the general tenor of this petition we may reasonably infer that at the period of its presentation the potter's art in Venice was reduced to the pro

duction of very ordinary wares. It is curious also, and perhaps confirmatory of the inferiority of Venetian artistic pottery, that an exception in the decree against importation should be made in favour of the maiolica of Valencia, which we know also to have been imported into Genoa. This ware, which had once been excellent, had greatly deteriorated in 1664. The culminating period of the excellence of Venetian pottery in respect to painting and design was probably the middle of the sixteenth century.

The earliest dated example is a deep circular dish in the writer's collection, the centre of which is occupied by the figure of a mermaid floating on the sea, a horn in her right hand, and regarding herself in a mirror which she holds in her left; the wide border is covered with intricate and very elegant arabesque sprays of foliage with fruits and flowers, among which are birds. The whole is painted in dull pale blue on a grey enamel and heightened with white, and on the reverse is the inscription "1540 · ADI · 16 · DEL · MESE · DEOTVRE." In the Brunswick museum there is a large dish, having the subject of Moses and Aaron entreating Pharaoh, with a rich border of medallions figurative of the months, &c., and the inscription "1568. Zener Domenigo da Venecia Feci in la botega al ponte sito del Andar a San Paolo." Pieces are in various collections having for mark a C-formed fish hook, with loop at one extremity and barbed point at the other. The only name which occurs in connexion with these examples is that of one *Dionigi Marini*, who signs a plate having this mark twice repeated, and the date 1636. In 1753 the Bertolini obtained a decree of the senate permitting them to open a shop in Venice for the sale of their maiolica, free for ten years of all import and export duties. Notwithstanding, the manufactory had ceased before the expiration of the term of the decree in 1763, when it was annulled.

The leading characteristic of the enamelled pottery produced at Venice in the sixteenth century is a close buff-coloured body, covered by an even glaze of grey colour, produced by the ad

mixture of a small portion of zaffre, and known as "smaltino." Upon this the design was outlined and shaded in blue, of a rather low tone, the high lights being touched in with white. Engraved



is a large dish, very elegantly ornamented, probably made about 1540. The reverse of the dishes generally have a belt of foliated sprays round the rim, and radiating flutings or alternating thin and thicker lines round the "cavetto." It is worthy of remark

that some of the Paduan wares are similarly ornamented, and we may thence infer some connexion between the establishments or an attempt at imitation; the fact that a cross was adopted as a mark at both places is also noteworthy.



The Venetian wares of the last century which, without positive proof, are generally believed to have been produced by the Bertolini have also distinctive qualities. They are remarkable for their thinness and lightness; baked at a high temperature, they are almost as sonorous as metal; the ornamentation round the rim is frequently executed in rilievo, and they have been mis-

taken for enamelled copper with *repoussé* flowers, &c. The colours used were generally blue and brown, with yellow occasionally, on a pale blue or dull white ground.

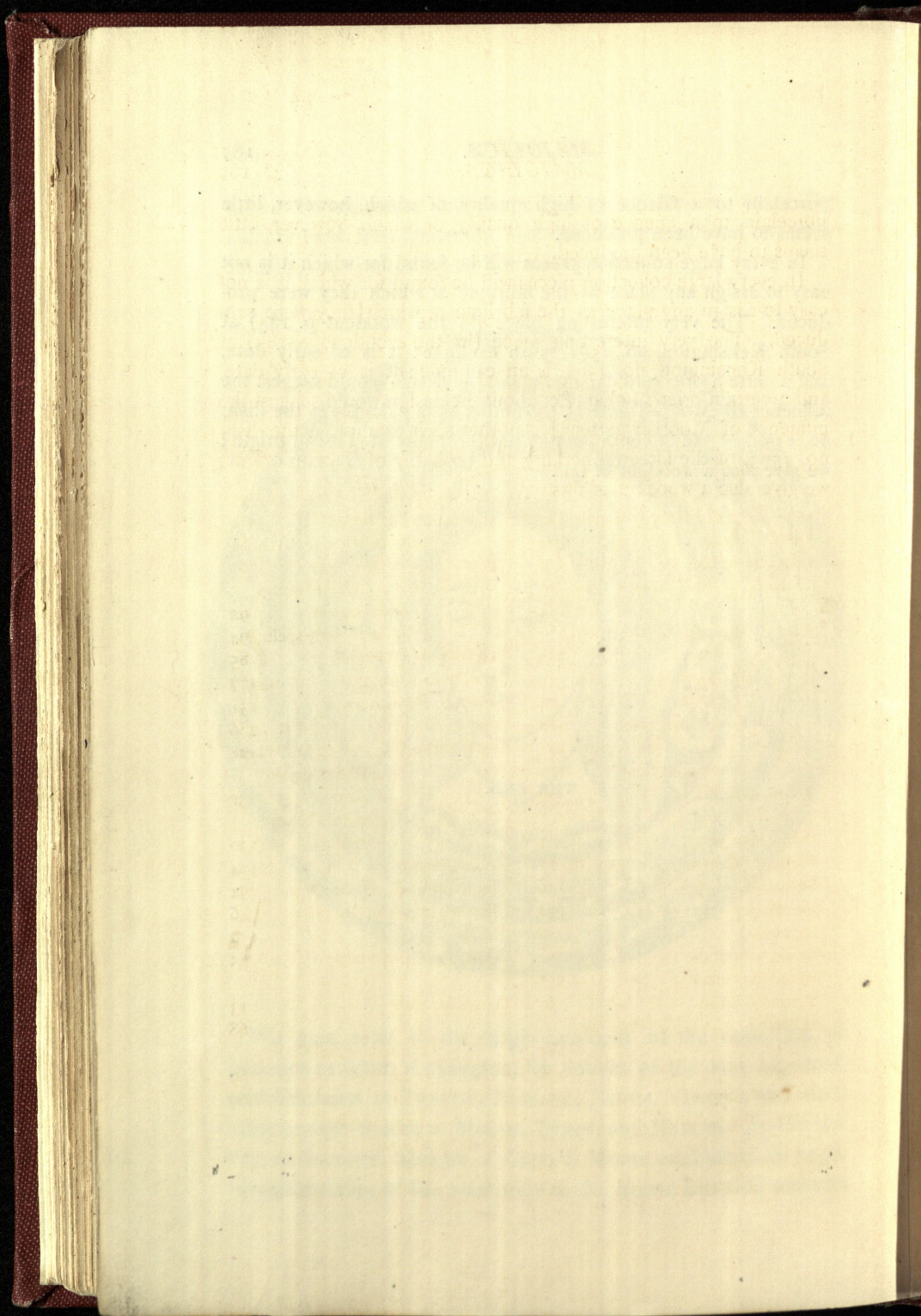


We must refer to the large catalogue of the collection of Maiolica at South Kensington, for notices of the less important establishments at TREVISO, BASSANO, PADUA, VERONA, and some other towns: as also at MILAN, TURIN, and NAPLES. In the last city, at the royal fabrique of Capo di Monte established in 1736, several varieties of fine ware were made, from a beautiful artificial

porcelain to a faïence of high quality, of which, however, little seems to have been produced.

In every large collection pieces will be found for which it is not easy to assign any place as the fabrique at which they were produced. The very interesting piece (in the woodcut p. 185) at South Kensington, no. 2562, is an example: it is of early date, and a certain oriental character about the design would suggest the influence of Moorish potters. Another such example is the dish, no. 2593, of the fifteenth century and probably of Tuscan origin; we give also a woodcut of this.

THE END.



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